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DISCARD

ABYSSINIAN TRAVELLING.

LIFE IN ABYSSINIA:

BEING NOTES COLLECTED DURING

THREE YEARS' RESIDENCE AND TRAVELS

IN THAT COUNTRY.

By MANSFIELD PARKYNS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—Vol. I.

WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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1853.

DISCARD

I. 1807
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"Like an old tale still; which will have matter to rehearse, though credit be asleep, and not an ear open."

WINTER'S TALE, Act. V. Scene 2.

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd
From wandering on a foreign strand?"

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

14292.
3 - 13 - 1873

LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE VISCOUNT PALMERSTON.

My dear Lord,

The personal kindness which you have shown me would perhaps hardly authorize me to affix so illustrious a name to this simple relation of my travels and residence in a part of the world so remote as Abyssinia.

But I cannot forget that the same wise and vigorous policy which has welcomed the efforts of freedom throughout Europe, has spread the great protection of the British Crown and power over the solitary and helpless traveller among nations whose deficient civilization permits them to respect only where they fear.

With grateful recognition of this service, rendered not only to our own countrymen, but to humanity in general,

I remain

Your obliged and faithful servant,

Mansfield Parkyns.

Woodborough Hall, Notts,
November, 1853.

PREFACE.

As this work has been a long time on hand, it is probable that many may expect to find in it indications of extraordinary care and painstaking. Lest they should be disappointed, I would forewarn them that, although three years have elapsed since my final return to England (in June, 1850), the pages which I now offer are the offspring of a few days' labour, scattered, with intervals of months, over that period—the hastily-written, scarcely-corrected production of a time when my mind was fully occupied with other matters.

In regard to proper names, I have had much difficulty in their orthography, and am still by no means satisfied with the way in which I have given them. I have, however, endeavoured to follow the course recommended by the Royal Geographical Society, of using the vowels according to the Continental rather than the English mode of pronunciation. Thus, Shétou should be pronounced Shay-too; Tigré, Tee-grey; Gaddy, Gahddy, or even nearly Guddy; Cafty, in like manner, almost Cufty; Balgadda, Balgudda, &c. &c. kh and gh are the gutturals like the Arabic خ and غ, and cannot of course be explained in English.

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LIFE IN ABYSSINIA.

INTRODUCTION.

I OFFER the following pages to the public with some diffidence, though not with any feeling of regret for the style or composition; for I do not pretend to be learned in book-making. To my mind, style and beauty of composition belong rather to the poet or novelist than to one whose only pretension is to detail in a rough way certain incidents and experiences of a rough life. What I regret is the paucity of the information I may be able to offer to my scientific friends.

A book of travels should be either a scientific work or an entertaining one. Mine has, I fear, but little to recommend it in either of these particulars. If it has a merit, it is that *I believe most of it* to be true. What I have described has been almost entirely what I have myself witnessed, or heard related on the spot. Although I do not bind myself to the exactness of a journal, in matters of times, places, and persons, I have, in only one or two instances, deviated from it, by combining into scenes various anecdotes, the value of which, as illustrations of my subject, would have been lost had

they been scattered through the work. In some few cases, I may have fallen into a common error, that of putting down as customs, incidents which I may have seen, but which, in reality, may happen scarcely once in a hundred years. I make this remark on account of the reputation poor Bruce got. Even to the present day one or two of his stories are discredited.

I have been often asked about "*the steak cut from the live cow*," and have only to say, once for all, *I firmly believe that Bruce saw what he has stated.* While I was in Abyssinia, a soldier, in conversation with me and several others, volunteered a story quite similar to Bruce's, both as regards the manner of the operation and the reasons why it was performed. On inquiry, he said that such a practice was not uncommon among the Gallas, and even occasionally occurred among themselves when, as in the case Bruce relates, a cow had been stolen or taken in foray. The men who drive her, being hungry, have no alternative but to go on fasting, kill the cow, or act as described. The first they will not do; the second would imply the necessity of carrying home the residue of the meat, or leaving it to the jackals,—neither of which would suit their inclinations; so the third is adopted.

I have heard it remarked, that it was scarcely possible to believe human beings capable of such cruelty. In answer to this, I would merely observe that no one should venture on such a remark in a country where salmon are crimped, and eels skinned, alive; nor should they talk of cruelty of any sort till the state trials, and

other books, showing the horrible death which many of our ancestors suffered for their adherence to the Stuart family, be out of print, and the old sentence for high treason forgotten. The Abyssinians cut off the hand, foot, or tongue, or perhaps put out the eyes, for such an offence; but this punishment is a mere shadow of the refinement of savage cruelty practised by our forefathers not many generations ago, and sanctioned by the laws of an enlightened and civilized nation.

In defending Bruce, I am not attempting to prepare the reader's credulity for some extraordinary story of my own. I haven't got anything marvellous to tell—I wish I had. All that I profess to do is to enter more particularly into the customs of the people I have visited than has hitherto been done. A tolerably long residence among them, and the fact of my having identified myself with the natives, perhaps more than any of my predecessors, not only in habits, but also in feelings, would lead me to hope that I may be enabled to do this with some correctness.

In regard to adventures, as a matter of course, no one who has passed a considerable number of years in travelling can have lived altogether without them. I have said little on this score, principally because what would be considered as adventures in Europe, appear, after a few years in Africa, as matters of every-day occurrence, and are consequently noted neither in the journal nor in the memory. It was my original intention to write solely on the habits of the people, without bringing myself into notice in any part of the story; but from

this I was dissuaded, by being told that without a little personal narrative the book would be unreadable. I have therefore divided the subject into two parts—Travel, and Manners and Customs. The first volume contains my journey from the coast to the capital, by way of Kiaquor, and my visit to the northern provinces. The former route is well known in the country, but has never, that I am aware of, been described in any book of travels, the few Europeans who have written on Abyssinia having generally chosen the Dixa road. Two French gentlemen went over part of the second tour, but, unfortunately, neither survived to describe it. The second volume contains the manners and customs, and my route from Adoua to Abou Kharraz on the Blue Nile; this is, I believe, entirely new, no one having been that way before me. I do not anticipate that any story of mine will be thought worth attacking. It must not, however, be understood that I do not fear criticism: on the contrary, I put myself in the most humble attitude before the mighty wielders of the pen, and plead,—that to attack my style would be unmanly, and betray a great want of good manners on their part; for it would be as bad as to quiz a foreigner because he could not speak good English; as I don't profess to be a writer any more than he would pretend to be a Briton:—to attack my descriptions would be impolitic, because, as I have always observed, stay-at-home critics generally hit upon true stories to pick to pieces, and make a point of believing the credible lies,—much after the manner of the old woman and

her sailor grandson. Jack was relating how he had gone by the overland passage to join his ship, then in China. "Well, and what did you see by the way?" asks Granny.—"Why, we saw flying-fish in the Mediterranean."—"What! fish with wings?"—"Yes; and some of them flying away from the dolphins fell on our decks."—"Ah, Jack! I see you've learnt no good with all your travels, to come back and make game of your poor old grandmother. Who in their senses would ever believe that fish could fly?"

Poor Jack was at a loss what next to relate; but since truth was considered a lie, he reversed the order of things, just to see whether a lie might not be accounted truth. So when in the course of his story he said that he had been at Suez, and to the spot where the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea in their flight from Egypt, she asked him, "Well, and what did you see there?"—"Oh! we saw a lot of Pharaoh's chariot-wheels, some of which came in very handy for repairing the paddles of the steamer. Perhaps you don't believe that, granny!"—"Of course, I do!" said she. "How can I help believing it, when it's written in the Bible?"

For geography I have done but little. The loss of parts of my journal, on two different occasions,—on one of which I was deprived of the whole of the observations, maps, &c., that I had made during my stay in Tigrè—was a severe blow to this part of my undertaking. A great number of the descriptions were made up from the rough notes I was enabled to retain, and from memory; but these were insufficient to recall the figure part

of the business. As this is perhaps the most essential of any, I shall for the future, should I travel, adopt a plan (which I should recommend to other travellers), namely, to make out two or three different copies of observations, and retain one always about the person.

In zoology I was more successful; though here again I have to regret many and serious losses. My first great collection, consisting of upwards of twelve hundred birds, was sent home by a German brig to Hamburgh, whence it was shipped to England. By a mistake on the part of the person to whose care I had consigned them in England, they were left in a warehouse near the Custom-house, for nearly four years, till my return; and on opening the packages, I found that nearly all the bright-coloured birds and many of the best sorts also had been picked out. It must be acknowledged that they were not packed in the securest manner, for, I being up in the country, they were sent down to the coast in their native cases, composed of bamboos, covered with hides, in charge of some of my own native servants, with orders to have them changed at Massàwa into securer boxes. This it appears my servants were unable to do, as the ship sailed on the day of their arrival, and they had barely time to get them on board. Whether, therefore, the missing specimens found their way out of the packages on board the brig, at Hamburgh, or in England, I cannot of course pretend to say; but should be inclined to suspect the latter, from the fact of many other collectors having before complained of the same misfortune in passing our ports. I really think some attention

should be paid to such conduct. Whole collections are sometimes ruined by these depredations. In some cases which I have heard quoted, they must have been perpetrated by knowing hands, as only the very rare specimens were purloined. In my case, however, I am not aware of the loss of any but gay-coloured ones; but these amounted to more than two hundred birds. Nine of the Abyssinian roller, several parrots, and six male specimens of the emerald cuckoo, the only perfect ones I possessed, might be named as samples; and it is a curious fact, that one female and one young male of the latter species, neither of which is at all brilliant in its plumage, were left me, but not a single old male bird.

Another fact would also prove that "my own, my native land," was the guilty spot. While looking over the birds with my brother, as I handed them out of their cases one by one, making a slight remark on each —(be it remembered, even after five years I know my birds as well as an old woman knows her chickens),—I came at last to a pause with a snuff-coloured pigeon in my hand. "Heave that on one side," said he, "and let's look at another." But still I stared, and turned it over and over again, and could make nothing of it at all. The bird was not of my skinning, nor of that of any of my servants; and I was perplexed, till at last I discovered a small scroll attached to his leg, on which was written, in a clear, business-like, round hand, and in good English (barring the spelling), "Pheasant-tailed Pidgeon." Now I never could write so neat a hand as that which was on the label. Secondly, I never wrote

the names of my birds, but only numbered them. Thirdly, I seldom make a mistake in orthography, and certainly from my youth up have always believed that there was no *d* in the word "pigeon." And, fourthly, the bird afterwards proved to be a native of the Moluccas, some thousands of miles distant from any point which I or mine ever reached. This mysterious bird will be set up with the rest as a paradox; for how he got into such good company I cannot guess, nor should I think can any one else, excepting perhaps his late owner. I suppose he considered that "a fair exchange is no robbery:" perhaps not; but at any rate he got a good bargain.

A second collection was sent over to Aden, with orders that it should be immediately forwarded to England; but, as it appears, I either forgot to express these orders by writing, or, if I wrote, my letter never reached its destination, and they were kept there till I sent for them, nearly four years afterwards. I received one case at Cairo. Of the contents, one-half, which consisted of arms, costumes, &c., were nearly destroyed by the rats; and of the other half, such as were originally clothed in fur or feather, having probably found that these appendages were inconvenient in so close an apartment and so hot a climate, had dropped them, and came to me in their naked skins. The second case, containing some arms, ornaments mounted in silver, and other curiosities, as well as specimens of zoology, is probably now either at Bombay, Calcutta, or, more likely still, in some old warehouse of the Transit Company in Egypt,

for it never came to me at all, although sent with its fellow from Aden.

Thus I lost a most valuable collection, for it consisted principally of birds which I do not now possess, and of some very rare and beautiful monkeys, besides the other curiosities. A third collection, from Nubia and the White Nile, which I had left in Egypt, arrived safe and in good condition, for I went out myself to bring it home, and, having seen it carefully through the Custom-house, never left it a moment till it was safely housed. It consisted of about six hundred birds, and about a ton weight of nigger arms and implements.

I have already extended my introductory chapter to a much greater length than I had intended; but before closing it, I would offer a few remarks which may perhaps be useful to future travellers in Abyssinia, as regards the preservation of health, which, after all, should be the most important care of every traveller; for unless a man's health and spirits are in tolerably good trim, he need not hope either to amuse himself or be able to collect in his excursions matter of amusement or instruction for others. This it may be said is pretty much the case everywhere, but it is more especially so in hot climates, where you require all your energies to shake off the languor and idleness which the temperature generates.

The high lands of Abyssinia enjoy probably as salubrious a climate as any country on the face of the globe. The heat is by no means oppressive, a fine light air counteracting the power of the sun. At certain seasons

of the year the low valleys, as of the Mareb and Taccazé, especially the former, are much to be feared, from the malaria which prevails, and which brings on, in persons exposed to its influence, most terrible inflammatory fevers, of which four cases out of five are fatal; and even in a case of escape from death, the effects on the constitution are such that it will be years before the sufferer recovers its shock, if indeed he should ever do so entirely. More than one of the few Europeans who have visited Abyssinia within the present century have fallen victims to it. Many have died also from dysentery—a complaint which often comes on in the rainy season as an epidemic. These two are the most commonly fatal complaints of Abyssinia.

The season most to be dreaded is immediately after the rains (about September), and the two or three following months. The cause of the prevalence of malaria at this time of the year is evident: the streams, which have been flooded for a long distance on each side of their ordinary limits, retire, and leave pools and marshy spots full of quantities of putrefied vegetable matter, the exhalations from which are the cause of the evil. It is seldom that a traveller need find himself in these spots during the dangerous season. When he does so, it is more frequently from carelessness or foolhardiness than from necessity; for here in Abyssinia the valleys are so narrow that it seldom takes you more than a short day's journey to pass from one village on the high ground to another on the opposite side. Moreover, unless you are pressed for time, you need not travel in the bad season.

It will be much better to rest for a few months in some comfortable place, where you may well employ yourself in revising your notes, sketches, &c., till the sun and dry weather shall have removed the dangers and annoyances from your path.

I once travelled through a whole "krumt" or rainy season, across one of the most febrile districts in this part of Africa, namely, the provinces of Shiré, Waldabba, and Walkait, in Abyssinia, and the plains of the Atbara and Soufi, on my way to the capital of Nubia; but then I had the experience of three years, a great part of which time had been passed in the backwoods about the Mareb. When I could get wood, I invariably lighted two large fires, and slept between them. This plan, though not very agreeable till you are used to it, is a capital preventive of disease; for during the day the sun's heat raises the moisture in steam, which, when the evening becomes cool, descends in the form of dew or fog, and in this form is one of the greatest helps to a fever. The heat you have around you answers the purpose of a local sun, and you are in no more danger than during the daytime. But when I say I lay between two fires, it must be understood that they were so close together that I was obliged to cover myself with a piece of hide or a coarse native woollen cloth, to prevent the sparks or embers, which might fly out, setting fire to my cotton clothes. Another plan, which is always adopted by the natives, is not, I think, a bad one:—Roll your head completely up in your cloth, which will then act as a respirator. You may often see a nigger lying

asleep with the whole of his body uncovered, but his head and face completely concealed in many folds.

Smoking I need not recommend. I can scarcely imagine that any man could travel long in these countries without learning the necessity of it. The Abyssinians of the high lands have, it is true, a strong religious prejudice against it, and therefore it is, comparatively speaking, but little used among them; indeed, in most parts of their country the climate is so fine as to render it needless, or perhaps hurtful. The natives of low districts have, however, no such prejudice. The whole of the Shangalla of the Mareb and Taccazé smoke abundantly; and the niggers of the White Nile, both men and women, are never without a pipe; and some of their pipes would contain a pound of tobacco. I had formerly a very large one, and gave it away; the largest I now possess would not contain much more than a quarter of that quantity. Nature is the founder of custom in savage countries; though we should scarcely be apt to suppose it if we judge by what we see in civilized parts of the world, where custom is the great enemy of nature.

I would also recommend another practice, that of never venturing abroad in a low, unhealthy spot till the sun has risen an hour or more. It is customary to hold the sun in great dread. I do not pretend to say whether my constitution in this respect differs from that of other men; but, for my part, I never retired into the shade to avoid the noonday heat; and for four years I never wore any covering to my head except the rather scanty

allowance of hair with which nature has supplied me, with the addition occasionally of a little butter. During the whole of that time I never had a headache. In India I should think this exposure would be dangerous to Englishmen—not from the climate, but from the very un-Indian life led by our countrymen there. I am positive that it must be death to a man to go into the sun after a ball, a heavy supper, and a due (or often undue) proportion of ardent spirits to wash all down. The spirits are a necessary consequence on the eating.

In these climates a man cannot eat much, or, even if he could, he ought not. If he eats much meat or other indigestible matter, he must of necessity take either quantities of pepper and other spices, as do the native Indians and Abyssinians, or he must drink hard, as do the Europeans in India and some parts of Egypt. Fortunately in Abyssinia there is little inducement to excess, either in eating or drinking. There are no good cooks, and the tap is of the most inferior quality; but the semi-starvation to which one is now and then reduced, so far from being a hardship in travelling, as it is often represented by tourists, is, if not continued to extremity, one of the greatest possible blessings. Of course a man who cares a straw about what he eats should never attempt to travel in Africa. His life would be anything but one of pleasure; it would indeed be a matter of hardship. It is not sufficient to say, "I can eat anything that is clean and wholesome." You will often have to eat things that are far from being either, especially the former. The proverb, "What

does not poison fattens," is much nearer the mark. I have eaten of almost every living thing that walketh, flieth, or creepeth—lion, leopard, wolf, cat, hawk, crocodile, snake, lizard, locust, &c.; and I should be sorry to say what dirty messes I have at times been obliged to put up with. Still I cannot manage the game "just properly kept," as it is called, but which I should call putrid, notwithstanding that it is so much esteemed by epicures in England: nor can I fancy hyæna or vulture, whose taste in this matter appears often to agree with that of our European gourmands.

From a child I never knew a good dinner from a bad one, so long as there was plenty; and this is a taste, or rather want of taste, almost essential to a traveller. I cannot, however, deny that I have at times envied the absolute enjoyment which some men seem to derive from feeding; for according to Epicurean philosophy it is a duty to obtain enjoyment in every possible manner in a life whose course is for the most part replete with misery: but, on reflection, no one can help feeling how wretched must be the existence of such men if by any chance they should be placed in situations where they could not procure their *necessary* luxuries.

Truly is it written, "Nature makes us poor only when we want necessaries; but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities." So it is with the hardships of travel. He who is blessed with a hardy frame, an easy, pliant temper, and an appetite which may be satisfied without luxuries, may travel all his life, and scarcely meet with more dangers or hardships than

proportionally would occur to any other man of opposite disposition in England. It is, in fact, my opinion (and I am borne out in it by first-rate authority) that dangers, *désagrémens*, and other mishaps of all kinds occur almost equally to every man, of whatever vocation he be. The landsman will pity the sailor tossed about at the mercy of the ocean: the seaman, when it blows great guns, will thank his stars he has got plenty of sea-room, and pity "them poor beggars as is in danger of having their houses blown about their ears."

To sum up all, avoid bad localities; follow as much as possible the native customs with regard to food; but, above all things, be abstemious in every respect; and, as a general rule, if you should be attacked by a fever, an emetic is not a bad remedy to begin with. Some people are for general bleeding in every case, though I believe our neighbours over the Channel are stronger advocates for such a treatment than we are. For my part, I never have been bled, and I hope I never shall, especially in a hot climate. Local bleedings, such as the natives practise, are often highly advantageous; and firing with a hot iron at their recommendation may also be adopted For severe inflammation of the bowels, when you cannot bear to be touched on the part, some boiling water poured on it will be a ready and effective blister,—a wet rag being wrapped round in a ring to confine the water within the intended limits. For bad snake-bites or scorpion-stings, bind above the part as tightly as possible, and cut away with a knife; then apply the end of an iron ramrod, heated to white heat. This of course

I mean supposing you to be in the backwoods, out of the reach of medicines. Aquafortis is, I have heard, better than the hot iron, as it eats further in; and for most scorpions and some sorts of snakes, to rub the part with strong sal volatile, butter of antimony, or other preparation of similar effect, will be sufficient. With all these modes of treatment, if you have the means, take internally twenty-five to thirty drops of laudanum, and a similar quantity of the liquid ammonia. There are, however, I believe, many snakes whose bite can scarcely be cured anyhow.

To these receipts I might add many others; some of which I have gained from natives, others from Europeans long resident in these countries or in India, and some the fruits of my own practice. But, as I am not a doctor, I suppose I have no right to prescribe: besides, there are perhaps very few of my readers who would care about my prescriptions, or to whom they might hereafter be useful.

To explain why I am, only now, relating events which occurred several years ago, I must inform the reader that I was nine years travelling, eighteen months in Europe, Asia Minor, &c., three years, of which the present work treats, and the remainder in various parts of Nubia, Kordofan, and Egypt. Nor were the latter, I hope, spent altogether idly, at least if I may judge from the ponderous heap of papers I accumulated during that period. I may some day publish them also. That of course will depend on whether or no they are wanted; for, to speak the truth, I find rewriting old

subjects considerably more troublesome than agreeable. I fully expect that all my acquaintances will flatter me upon the present work; but that is a matter of no importance. I should think them rude if they did not, and yet shall not believe them if they do. I quite agree with some former writer, who hints that the best compliment that can possibly be paid to an author is —*to buy his book:* and from this criterion I shall judge whether it is wished that I should appear in print a second time or not, more than from the opinions either of my friends or even of the reviewers. I have been more than a year and a half at home, and it will be some time yet before this work is published. But I don't consider this in anywise extraordinary or blameable. Extraordinary it is not, because Bruce, Waterton, and others of our best traveller authors, were much longer about their books than I have been. Blameable it certainly cannot be; because no one has been the sufferer but myself.

Once more I would express a hope that leniency will be granted me for any rash opinions I may have advanced, in consideration that, when the basis of this work was formed, I not only wanted ability, but also age and experience. And now I cannot do better than conclude in the words of my very esteemed friend Mr. Samuel Pickwick, of Dulwich:—"I shall never regret having devoted the greater part of *nine* years to mixing with different varieties and shades of human character, frivolous as my pursuit of novelty may have appeared to many.* * * Numerous scenes, of which I had no

previous conception, have dawned upon me, I hope to the enlargement of my mind and the improvement of my understanding. If I have done but little good, I trust I have done less harm, and that none of my adventures will be other than a source of amusing and pleasant recollections to me in the decline of life. God bless you all!"

CHAPTER I.

Constantinople — Modern Turks, civilized and uncivilized — Plains of Troy — Alexandria — Want of an English Church — State of the lower orders — Egyptian Donkey-Boys — Hotels — Canal voyage — Delta of the Nile — Barrage — Scenery — Kyef — Boulac.

I NEED not trouble either myself or my readers with a description of my route from England, through Switzerland, Milan, and Venice: they are too well known to require it. Trieste and the Ionian Islands, Greece and Smyrna, were passed in succession: these too have of late days become part of the ordinary annual tour of our migrating countrymen. Nor is Constantinople any longer a place of curiosity. The Turks have spoilt the best part of their customs and feelings by aping our ideas of civilization. Where formerly was to be seen a fine race of brave, and in many points highly civilized, men, now are a lot of bad imitation Franks, whose costume, manners, and customs are a clumsy rehearsal of what they have seen among the renegades and refugees of all nations, who, mostly labouring under difficulties which made their stay at home disagreeable, have come to sojourn with them. They have copied to a nicety all the follies and debauchery of the class of men whom they have chosen as patterns, retaining none of the good moral precepts and practices of Islam, but only its superstition

and bigotry;—if indeed, as in many cases, they have not carried their imitation so far as to ape the Christian even in atheism—a principle, or rather a stupidity, but too common among Europeans of the Levant.

Where is now the fine old Turk of former days, with his turban, long beard, and dignity? A solitary instance may occasionally be seen in Constantinople (probably come from some remote part of the country), contrasting with the Turks of the present day like some monument of the grandeur of ancient Athens beside the trumpery huts of the modern town. Among the Kourds, Anadolians, and Caramanli, are still to be found the class of men who for a time were the terror of the world; but poor Constantinople is the nurse of that puny race which has given the mistaken notion to many Europeans that all Orientals are effeminate, fit only to loll on the soft cushions of their harìm's apartments, and smoke the narghilé to perpetuity. No idea could be more erroneous. As for the town Turks of the present day, they are far too Europeanized for any such manners: and as regards the countrymen, or true Turks, they are as hardy and active a race as any west of them. Let any one who may doubt this assertion examine the caravans of pilgrims from every part of the Turkish empire, and he will see among the bare-legged and pistol-girt Hajji Babas, from Koordistan, Caramaniá, Anadōle, Roumelia, and even Boshnia, as sturdy and honest-looking a set of fellows as could be found anywhere.

I have lived much among Turks of every nation and

class—more, I am happy to say, among the uncivilized than the civilized; and here is the comparative description I should give of them:—*Uncivilized Turk:* middle-sized; of powerful frame; blunt but sincere character; brave; religious, sometimes even to fanaticism; cleanly, temperate, addicted to coffee and pipes; fond of a good blade, and generally well skilled in its use; too proud to be mean, cowardly, or false; generous to prodigality; and in dress fond of bright colours and rich clothing, of which he often wears three or four suits at a time, one over the other.—*Civilized Turk:* under-sized; of delicate frame; polite, but insincere; not over-brave; often boasting of atheism; neglecting the ablutions of his religion, partly because the Franks are dirty, and partly because his new costume won't admit of them; given to Cognac and cigarettes; fond of a showy sheath if a "militaire," or of a pretty cane if a civilian; no pride whatever, but lots of vanity; possesses no Oriental generosity; and for dress wears a frock coat, stays to give a small waist, a gay-coloured "gent's vest," ditto ditto inexpressibles, often of a rather "*loud* railway pattern," and strapped down very tight, so as to show to advantage the only distinguishing Oriental features which remain to him—a very crooked pair of legs; his "chaussure" consists of a pair of French grey merino "brodequins" with patent leather toes; his head-dress is a ridiculously small red scullcap, worn at the back of the head, and often containing a small piece of looking-glass, whereby on all occasions to arrange the rather unruly coarse hair it frequently covers. Straw-colour

Naples imitation gloves, at two dollars a dozen, and an eyeglass, are generally considered as indispensable parts of the "getting up alla Franca." In point of manners, the lowest *real* Turk is a nobleman; the best of the Europeanized lot is barely a gentleman.

Our stay at Constantinople was altogether very agreeable. We had a pleasant party at Missirie's Hotel, and made many interesting visits to the mosques, seraglios, and derwishes, both howlers and dancers. As we arrived just about the time of the great feast of Bairam, we were lucky enough to see the Sultan in procession on one or two different occasions. Having parted with the friends who had travelled with me through Switzerland, I started for Smyrna, by the overland way across the plains of Troy, in company with a gentleman whom I had met at the hotel. This was indeed a most agreeable journey: the scenery was charming. At one time our road would take us for two or three days through magnificent oak forests; at another through olive plantations, or along the lovely shores of the Archipelago. The tombs of Achilles and Patroclus, and the fine ruins of Troas Alexandria, were soon left behind. As we advanced the country became more hilly, and in consequence more picturesque. The colourings of the foregrounds were brilliant in the extreme. Rocks of the richest red and yellow ochres contrasted well with the dark green foliage of the pine and the autumnal orange of the walloneel oak. In places a smooth turf slope, leading down to a rivulet, would give the scene the appearance of a park, while from every

elevation the beautiful island of Tenedos and the Archipelago were seen blue in the distance. Farther on the Gulf of Adramyt and the island of Mitylene came in view; then Aivali and Pergamos; and we arrived at Smyrna after as agreeable a nine days' ride as could be wished for.

After some days I left Smyrna for Alexandria in company with Mr. R. M. Milnes, who had joined us first at Syra, and afterwards, when at Constantinople, hearing of my intention to proceed to Egypt, had kindly proposed that we should make the tour of the Nile together.

The appearance of Alexandria is highly interesting to a man who delights in commerce, or whose heart gladdens as he sees an embryo Europe about to be hatched in Africa; for instead of a rude but picturesque city, such as the Arabian tale would lead one to fancy would be the port of Egypt, he beholds a few narrow and uninteresting suburban streets surrounding a fine square of houses, built altogether in European style, and many of them the residences of the different consuls, bearing the ensigns of their respective nations. The square is very large, and from its shape and position would do credit to the fairest capital of Europe. A couple of trumpery fountains have lately been added, which, however, I believe can seldom be induced to play. At the north-eastern corner is the site given by his Highness Mohammed Ali to the British residents for the erection of an Anglican Protestant Church. The residents have done their best towards its completion; but as yet it

stands a half-finished building, with the melancholy scaffolding rotting away.

The drawbacks to agreeable feelings on first visiting Alexandria are many: among them, the state of the lower orders of society must call up a sense of shame in the breast of every European. Drunkenness, roguery of all sorts, begging, and broken English and Italian, are the first sights and sounds which greet his landing, the first proofs of his being in a country inoculated with European ideas and manners. The donkey-boys crowd round the wharf and beleaguer the traveller, who with difficulty extricates himself from their clutches by desperately throwing himself for no earthly reason on to the nearest animal, and riding a distance of a hundred or two yards in a most uncomfortable manner: in saying uncomfortable, I mean only for new comers; old residents find that the donkeys go wonderfully easy, are very sure-footed, and get over the ground at a great pace.

On my return to Cairo, after some years' residence in the upper country, I was astonished at this difference, and attributed it to my having become more of an "asinestrian," or to the breed having improved. I discovered, however, that it altogether depended on a peculiarly African cast of feature and complexion that a long stay in the country gives to Europeans, distinguishing them from new arrivals. I was enlightened on the subject by a donkey-boy of my acquaintance, who at my particular request made the ass I was riding change at once from a free-going, easy-paced animal to

the most stubborn brute that ever was crossed. A very favourite trick of the boys is to give the ass a peculiar dig with the end of a stick on one side, as if to make him accelerate his pace, whereas the only effect produced is a most disagreeable sideways wriggle of the hind-quarters, which generally half dislodges the novice; a second dig in another place produces a kick, which often completes his overthrow, to the great amusement of the boy, who, however, is always ready to howl, and thus attract for you the attention and ridicule of all who may be passing by, if you should make the slightest gesture indicative of an assault on his person. I am speaking now, perhaps, more of the young gentlemen of Cairo than those of Alexandria, with whom I have never had any intimate acquaintance. I have since my return been gratified by seeing them described in tourists' books as active, lively, and amusing. Most truly are they so; for activity they cannot be surpassed, nor for their amusing talents either, though these are generally employed at the expense of the traveller rather than for his benefit.

I have often while passing been made to laugh at the queer *double-entendres* contained in the remarks of some of these boys, and the very simple and self-satisfied answers of their green-veiled and parasoled employers. I have more than once rated them, and still more often joined in the mirth they caused at their patron's expense; but I once thought it might afford me some amusement if I could, by shamming ignorance of the language, have a long ride and its accompanying

conversation. Accordingly I put on some European clothes and a cap, and, to make the thing more complete, purchased some six-franc "brodequins" and an eighteenpenny cane. But though I tried it several times, it was to no effect. I persisted in speaking English or Italian, but to no purpose. The mysterious change of appearance, and probably of smell also, wrought in me by nearly seven years' acclimatizing, and which makes the donkeys go easily, and protects me from annoyance of all kinds of noxious insects and vermin, appeared also to have its efficacy on the tongues of the donkey-boys, and I could not induce them to speak anything but very civil Arabic, nor even to ask for more than double their fare. At last I bethought me of the veil and umbrella dodge, and having equipped myself altogether *à l'Anglaise* (that is, with shoes instead of brodequins, a straw hat instead of a cap, and a thick stick instead of a cane), I addressed a boy, beginning my conversation (as all Englishmen are *supposed* to do) with a strongish expletive, and continuing my inquiry in very bad English, as all Englishmen do, in the idea, I suppose, that, because the natives speak a broken language, they will digest it better if broken up ready for their use. The bait took, as the boy's answer convinced me. "Here, master, *you* one very good jackass." We went a long ride down to Shoubra gardens (I was then at Boulac), and the boy kept up, with the gravest possible face, a desultory conversation of the following nature. (N.B. The words in italics are supposed to be said in Arabic.) The donkey stumbles.

"You boy, your donkey not good at all!" "Yes, master, him berry good, *better than his rider.*" "Go on fast!" "Yes, master (a-a-a—with a dig causing a wriggle)"—[to ass]: "*Get on, Christian, son of a Christian, ridden by a Christian,—ass, son of an ass, ridden by an ass,—Kàfir* (infidel), *son of a Kàfir, ridden by a Kàfir.*" And then perhaps he would amuse himself and the passers-by with a roundelay of the following signification:—

"Nusseràni, kelb owàni,
Àkal el helwa, wa khallàni—
Àho, el Nusseràni.

"Christian, blind dog,
Ate the sweet thing, and left me—
Here he is, the Christian."

"That's a very nice song: what does it say?" "All 'bout master and donkey, berry good, me behind, with stick, make 'm go; master give me shilling me sing him song again!" Then he would perhaps give the donkey a spiteful dig under the tail, thereby eliciting a kick, while at the same time he would express a wish (in Arabic) that the stick in his hand were a khasoug (or impaling post) dedicated to the especial elevation of the ass and his rider. So we went on for a long time (the parts of the conversation I have selected are the few which would bear printing in English), till at last, as fortune would have it, I was recognised by a Turkish friend of mine, who addressed me in Arabic. Not wishing to appear to cut him, I answered, but first got a good hold of my follower, which interrupted him in a most benevolent expression of the kind manner in which

he would like to treat all the members of my family, enumerating each one in succession from my great-grandfather and his respected lady downwards, and intermingling them in a most facetious manner with the ancestry of the animal I bestrode. "*You would, would you, you son of a dog!*" said I, turning round, and seizing him: "and now that I have you in my power, what shall I do with you?" To this, of course, were added one or two of the rather strong Turkish expressions which appear to be necessary to make his own language intelligible to an Arab of Egypt. The change in the boy's face was so amusing that I could scarcely forbear from laughing. My friend also came up and joined in the fun. The boy was all prayers and entreaties. I gave him a few kicks, and, having taken off my veil and given him the umbrella to carry, we returned home. On the way back both donkey and driver behaved remarkably well. After paying the boy his just dues, and not a para more, which he received without a grumble, I administered a few more kicks, and then gave him a shilling for the amusement he had afforded me.

I should recommend every traveller to Egypt to go to Rey's Hotel in Alexandria; and in Cairo, if a bachelor, to Shepheard's British Hotel; if with a family, to either this or the Hôtel de l'Europe, which is kept by a Swiss of the name of François. The latter is very comfortable—in fact more like a private house; but they cannot accommodate beyond a certain limited number of persons. Most travellers have the habit of recom-

mending the hotel they happen to put up at in passing through a town, without knowing anything of the merits or demerits of the others. I can fairly say that I know them all. There is not an hotel in Cairo or Alexandria that I have not been in, and tasted its good cheer, on more than one occasion, besides having during more than a year's residence compared the notes of various of my friends staying at them.

The Egyptian Transit Company have established a line of steamers between Atfé (at the junction of the Nile and the Mahmoudieh Canal) and Boulac, the port of Cairo, and track-boats from Alexandria to Atfé. This mode of travelling is by all means to be preferred, though some travellers choose to hire a sailing-boat, and "see as much of the country as they can." Vain hope! The best way to see the country is to get into the steamer and go ahead as fast as possible, and, if you like, go to sleep even till you are pretty near to Cairo. The canal is in most parts very shallow, as it fills in with sand as fast as it is cleared; but the first half being the deepest, the passenger-boat is tugged by a steamer, sometimes by two. After the halfway-house the tugs drop ashore, and horses take their place. On leaving the pretty country villas which extend for a short distance out of Alexandria the whole canal becomes most uninteresting. A solitary shrub or two, probably a tamarisk, only adds to the barren appearance of the otherwise naked banks. Smoking, or running foul of the native boats, which are often so clumsy and deep-laden as to be unable to get out of the way, although warned

by a man who from the bows of the boat keeps perpetually hallooing through a speaking trumpet, or, if tracking with horses, watching the upset of basking buffaloes caught by the horns and turned completely over by the towing-line, and sometimes the upset even of women, who, while filling their jars with water, generally manage to get the rope entangled about their legs,—these are about the only ways of getting rid of the monotony of the voyage to the mouth of the canal, which occupies from twelve to twenty hours, according to luck and the depth of the water. Little more than half an hour is required at Atfé for shifting the luggage from the track-boat of the canal to the steamer of the Nile, by means of camels and porters. It is often arranged for the boat to arrive here during the night; and it is as well it should be so, for the first part of the river is nearly as uninteresting as the canal. Atfé was originally a mere village, but is now fast increasing, from the importance it has acquired, and daily continues to acquire, since the navigation of the canal has made it a sort of halfway-house of halt between the capital and principal port of Egypt.

The traveller may repose tranquilly till within a few hours of Cairo; when arriving near the head of the Delta he must rouse himself for one of the most worthy sights of Egypt. I consider it *the* most worthy; for not only is it in itself as interesting as any other, but it is also one which must gratify the vanity of a modern traveller, standing as it does amid the prodigious works of the ancients, as if to show that even now-a-days we

can equal if not surpass them. When I first went up the Nile no "barrage" existed,—a plan for damming up the Nile and carrying its waters down three canals, one of which was to run north and south the length of the Delta; the others, one westward, the other eastward from above the barrage, and thus by irrigation to extend considerably the cultivable land of Egypt. This plan was proposed to Mohammed Ali Pacha by a French engineer. The Viceroy, always ready for improvements which appeared likely to benefit the land, and at the same time gain for himself a great name, accepted the proposition; and M. Mougel (a French gentleman holding the rank of Bey or Colonel in the Egyptian army) had, up to the time when I left Cairo, the direction of the works. It required a genius of the first order to plan and superintend the execution of so vast a design; and no one who has visited the barrage can with any justice deny that its architect has fully earned for himself such a reputation. For magnitude, both in the idea and amount of work, solidity and perfection of finish, the barrage may well be ranked among the wonders of the world.

The head of the island (Delta) was marked out as the site of a town, a broad canal running through its centre; and the streets, quarters, &c., arranged with the order and regularity of a European town. The whole of the shores of the river and canals round the island and opposite to it on either side are, for some distance, built with brick slopes faced with stone, and in five terraces; so that there may be no inconvenience attending the towing of boats, whatever may be the height

of the Nile. The principal street through the proposed town runs west and east, and is terminated at either extremity by a magnificent bridge thrown across each branch of the Nile, thus opening a direct communication between the eastern and western provinces. Great labour has been undergone in the construction of the bridges from the want of a solid bottom to build the piers upon. For the purpose of obviating this difficulty many mechanical inventions of a most interesting nature have been resorted to; some of which are due to the chief engineer himself, while others have been taken from models made in France, but put into practice for the first time, and perfected, in Egypt. As regards the finish of the work, I can only say that if it were small enough the whole would be worthy of a glass case. Mougel Bey sustains moreover in the highest degree the character for *bonhomie* and politeness which we are in the habit of attributing to most of his nation. I have on more than one occasion visited the works, and have always been received by him with the greatest possible attention and hospitality.

There was a report spread in Egypt about the time of my leaving that country (1850) that these works were to be abandoned; and the great want of proper supplies and workmen seemed really to warrant the supposition of its truth. I can only say that such an act would be far from gaining for Abbas Pacha the title of worthy successor of his illustrious grandfather.

From opposite the tomb of Sheikh Ibrahim, "of the sycamores" (so called from the trees growing near it),

may be had a good view of the great pyramids of Gizeh. The river from this place assumes a more agreeable aspect. On the one side are picturesque villages, Kharaganìya, Bassouse, and others, for the most part ornamented with trees growing among the houses, and their snow-white minarets contrasting with the dark-blue sky; the whole rising out of a fertile and in many parts well-cultivated plain. On the other side spreads the vast desert of Libya, the monotony of whose outline is scarcely broken by the pyramids and a few hills. At length the gardens and summer palace of Shoubra come in view. After this the river's course is bounded on one side for a mile or two by the avenue of sycamore-trees which shade the road from Cairo to Shoubra. Every here and there a "sàggia," or irrigating wheel, turned by oxen or horses, is passed. The creaking of the wood-work, splashing of the water, and singing of the boy who drives the animals, though in our bustle-loving climate they would be considered as rather a nuisance than otherwise, form in Egypt a part, and no inconsiderable one, of the enjoyments of what is called "kyef." Now "kyef" is an expression as essentially Oriental, not only in the word but in the feeling, as "comfort" is in English; nay, even more so, for comfort may be obtained anywhere by artificial means. A French establishment may be, and often is, as comfortable as an English one; but "kyef" depends on two things;—first, the state of mind; and secondly, the climate. Now, although I have seen that many three-months' tourists have written about "kyef," as if they knew what it was, yet I deny the possibility

of such being the case. As well might we expect that a genuine Oriental, if taken into a well-furnished European room, having his back aching from the unnatural position of sitting on a chair, or his fingers cramped with attempting to use a knife and fork, could at all appreciate what we call "comfort." *It requires years, not months, of residence in the East* for a European to appreciate what is meant by "kyef." The body and mind must be brought by the climate to a state of habitual repose. I cannot find a better word than repose. For the first few months, or even the first year or two, the sensation produced would be languor. Every species of excitement or tendency to excitability must be worn away.

My *beau idéal* of "kyef" is lounging in the afternoon on a carpet under the shade of an orange grove, at the season of the year when a few blossoms only remain, just enough to impart a fragrance that shall be perceptible but not overpowering, and while the places of the others are being taken by the coming fruit. A "jedwal," or water-course, should be close by, for nothing is more agreeable than the murmur made by putting a bit of stick or a finger gently into running water. The "sàggia" which supplies it must be at the distance of about two hundred yards, and one or two others at greater distances to vary the sounds. Very high walls should surround the garden, which ought to be as large as possible, and as far from the habitations of man as to prevent the sound of voices reaching at all distinctly. A double jessamine or two

at a distance of twenty to thirty yards may sometimes prove agreeable. In all matters of scent and sound the great art is that they should be just perceptible: a distant murmur of voices is much to be sought for; a single audible laugh would be ruinous to "kyef." A well-prepared "narghilé" may be smoked, or long jessamine pipe covered with damp rags. The gurgling of the water in the former is agreeable to some; but, although at other times I smoked nothing else, yet from the exertion required by the narghilé I gave a decided preference to the latter on these occasions. The sensation, if there be any, is indescribable; but I believe the enjoyment principally to consist in the entire absence of thought or sensation of any kind. The body is in a state of repose, so that to be obliged to move a finger contrary to one's natural impulse would be disagreeable in the extreme. The mind, too, must be perfectly tranquil. The imagination seems to paint agreeable scenes, but so faintly that their outline remains not an instant on the memory. I remember having been once disturbed by an English friend who came walking down an alley at a pace which made me shudder, and shouting as he came, "Hallo, old fellow! I say, what are you up to?" It is a long time since this occurred, but the shock I sustained made such an impression on my nerves that I can almost imagine that it happened only five minutes ago. Of course I was obliged to be civil, very glad to see him, and such like; and, in reply to his inquiry, I remarked that I was only taking my after-dinner "kyef." "Oh!" said he, "I must take

one too;" for all the world as if he was going to take a glass of wine or a bottle of soda-water. So down he seated himself on my carpet, endeavouring to screw his pantaloon-clad legs into something like a tailor's squat; but as his garments wanted letting out, and his joints were yet stiff from the freezing north, he looked wofully uncomfortable. After a few minutes' puffing away at my pipe, as if it had been a bad cigar (during which time his legs had gradually assumed a more easy posture), he exclaimed, "Well, I declare this is very jolly!" —thereby convincing me that he knew nothing about it; for to be aware of sensation is at once a proof that true "kyef" does not exist. From the time of his arrival I had given up all thoughts of repose, and when he made this remark I was waking myself up with a "narghilé," and answered "Very jolly!"

But while we have been wandering among orange groves, the steamer has passed in succession one of the garden residences of Abbas Pacha, the country house of the late Khalil Effendi, that of Yussuf Bey, the Calico Printing Establishment directed by Mr. Bennett, the magnificent garden and palace of Ahmed Tahir Pacha, that of the late Ibrahim Aga, the iron-foundry under the direction of Mr. Maxton, the cotton-mills, arsenals, custom-houses, and is at length arrived at the Transit Wharf in Boulac. Here the traveller lands, and finds omnibuses ready to take him to the Ezbekyeh,—the square in which the principal hotels are situated. When I first went to Egypt there was only one good hotel, that of Messrs. Hill, in a little narrow alley called the

Barabra's Street (Darb el Barabra). This no longer exists. The hotels are in new hands, who have chosen a better locale, on one of the sides of the great square, which encloses a large public garden.

I have already occupied more time and space than I intended before coming to the country which in my title-page I profess to describe. The numerous books of Travels in Egypt give full accounts of the lions of Cairo, while 'Lane's Modern Egyptians' tells of the manners and customs of the people; and I feel that were I to attempt to write on them, I should fill a book with perhaps superfluous matter, and tire my readers before they came to Abyssinia. To tell a little would be impossible, for being acquainted with the habits of Eastern life as well as, if not better than, with European, I should not know where to begin nor where to end. It is, therefore, more prudent to leave the matter entirely untouched, and simply to state that after a short stay in Cairo, the greater part of which was passed by me on a sick bed, we started in a boat for the tour of the Nile. After a very pleasant voyage of two months, which my companion has most truly described in 'Palm Leaves' as a

> "Time that full at once could seem
> Of busiest travel and of softest rest,"

we returned to Cairo, where, my destiny leading me southwards, while Mr. Milnes was obliged to return to his parliamentary duties in England, we parted—I hope with mutual regret.

CHAPTER II.

Sporting equipment — Articles for presents — Leaving Cairo — An evil omen — Desert of Suez — Camel-riding — Stations of the Transit Company — An Englishwoman in the Desert — Warning to her countrywomen — Consequences of a good dinner — Arrival at Suez.

OF our voyage I need not speak. After 'Palm Leaves,' 'Eōthen,' and 'The Crescent and the Cross,' who would venture to attempt a fresh description of the Nile? I know the river well, having made not one, but many excursions over it; but still I feel that I cannot do better than leave alone that part of it which has been already so ably described.

On our return to Cairo I found a letter waiting for me, announcing that the arms, instruments, &c., which I required had been forwarded to me. After several days' inquiries and annoyance I found them mislaid in a warehouse. My equipment was not quite so formidable as Mr. Gordon Cumming's: it consisted of a double-barrelled gun, a small single rifle carrying an ounce ball, a pair of double pistols, and a large bowie knife—the fire-arms all by Westley Richards. My knife was sent to me as a present, and "warranted to chop off a tiger's head at a blow." Truly it was a most formidable weapon; a blade fourteen inches long, more

than two broad, and nearly half an inch thick, might well be warranted to go through anything it fell upon; but I should for the future prefer a smaller knife and an axe: the large knife was not handy for skinning, butchering, or eating with; nor was it adapted for cutting lodge poles or firewood, and could therefore count only as a defensive or offensive weapon. Now a small knife would answer better for the former purposes, while an axe would not only be useful for its legitimate work, but also, in the hands of a man tolerably accustomed to its use, prove a most effective weapon either against man or beast. As for my fire-arms, they had a long and rough trial, and altogether stood it admirably. In locks I never found them surpassed: my rifle was second-hand; but even now (1851) the lock is as good as new, and has never been in a gunsmith's hands since I had it, or even been cleaned by any one but myself; and this is a good deal to say, seeing that, with the exception of this last year, I have given it no rest. The wood-work, too, of all of them was first-rate. I would not exchange my old rifle-stock for ten new ones, dingy as it is. Another gun and a new rifle (by a very good London maker) were sent out to me in 1847; the wood of this rifle was so much warped by the heat of Sennaar that it could not be induced to fit the barrel by any fair means; and the servant who carried the gun happening to fall with his donkey (no uncommon occurrence), the stock broke short off like a bit of glass: so I gave them both away.

So much for commendation of Mr. Westley Richards's

tools. Now, if he will take the advice of so humble a judge as myself, I would suggest that the stuff which he puts in his barrels might be of a little more durable quality. They shoot uncommonly well at first; but, after a few years' regular use, the gun-wads shrink a number, also the rifle bullets. I do not believe such to be always the case, as I know of one or two of his old guns of twenty years' standing which shoot as strong as one could wish; but I have *lately* heard some few complaints similar to mine. Nothing of human construction is perfect, and I hope my suggestions may not be taken amiss, as they are offered with the feeling that a little attention to the quality or temper of the barrel would make the gun as near perfection as possible, the workmanship of the whole being already perfect.*

In addition to what I received from England, I took, by way of presents to the chiefs whose territories I might visit, some pieces of white muslin for turbans, twenty or thirty yards of red cloth, three brace of common pistols, a dozen light cavalry sword-blades, and four common Turkey rugs.

I hate journals in general; one gets so sick of reading dates, and at every ten lines meeting with the words

* Since writing the above, I have seen some letters in the *Times* paper regarding the failure of a large quantity of percussion-caps belonging to Government. This put me in mind to mention my experience in those matters, as it may be interesting to some sportsmen.

I started from Egypt supplied with 6000 of Westley Richards's caps, in bags of 500 each. During nearly seven years I never knew one of them either to fly or miss fire, though they had been exposed to the hottest and dampest climates possible, and three times soaked in crossing rivers, and dried in the sun afterwards.

"Started at such a time." Still, in some journeys, such as the one I am about to relate, sea-voyages, &c., there are no means of doing otherwise. With this apology, therefore, I begin, hoping that further on, as I reach more interesting scenes, my description of them will improve in proportion.

So, towards evening on the 5th of March, 1843, I started from Cairo, hurried on by a message from the British Consul at Suez, who had sent to tell me that an Arab boat, bound for Jedda, was to sail on the 6th or 7th. I left the inn mounted on a jackass (the cab of Egypt), which was to take me to the gates; but, having to wait a short time for my dragoman in the Ezbekyeh, my donkey lay down with me, and some passers-by exclaimed, "That Frank is going to Abyssinia!" That they should have made this remark at the moment of my misfortune was an evil omen, but I had strength of mind sufficient to bear up against it, and to continue my journey.* We were soon joined by my servant, who had remained behind for the pass-word which was to open the city gates for us; and, after passing in safety the camp of some of our old friends, the Arnaouts, the fresh air of the desert blew on our faces. It was nearly dark; and thus leaving, as I was, for a long period, all civilization, friends, comforts, &c., had I been a poet I should no doubt have managed a neat poem in several cantos; or had I been a "tourist,"

* I don't myself quite see the merits of this adventure; but as I happened to have been just reading a book made up of similar ones, it appears I got drawn into following its style.

three pages of very feeling matter; but, being neither, I filled my pipe afresh, and changed my donkey for a dromedary that was waiting for me. Leaving the burden camels under charge of my servant, I proceeded at a lighter pace, attended only by the camel-man, a Tauari Arab, and singing whenever the horrid jolting and swinging of the camel would allow me utterance—*

"Ah! dans l'Arabie,
Quel heureux métier,
Quelle douce vie,
Même un chamelier!
Il franchit l'espace
Rapide comme le vent,†
Sans laisser sa trace
Au sable brûlant.
Tin, tin, tin," &c.

After going along in the dark for some distance, we came near an encampment of Bedouins. My guide here made signs that he must leave me for a few minutes to fetch some provision for the journey. Had I wished to object, I should, in my happy ignorance of Arabic, have been unable to find terms to do so; but, seeing no cause or impediment why the man should not have his food, I tacitly acquiesced. After a considerable absence he returned, bringing with him an Arab boy and another dromedary, instead of his proposed supper. He next proceeded to inform me, by dumb show, that I was

* I have been told that I am here guilty of an anachronism, as this song was not written till several years after I pretend to have sung it. As I do not lay claim to a poetical genius or the authorship of the song, I can only say that I perhaps should have sung it had I known it.

† We were going 3½ miles an hour, or thereabouts.

expected to leave his camel and mount that of his companion. I objected, till he mentioned the names of my servant and other persons who had procured the animals for me, on which I concluded that some mysterious arrangement had been made for my benefit, and therefore acceded.

My new guide was an active, good-humoured lad of seventeen. He trotted along famously all night, and we had no misadventures, excepting that we lost the way (then not quite so clearly marked as now), and that the camel, when his master left us to find the track, after turning round and round, and grumbling in a manner indicative of anything but a happy state of mind, suddenly knelt down, and nearly dislodged me from his back. Partly for humanity's sake, and partly because I did not know what trick he might play me if I attempted to get him on his legs again, I allowed him to be quiet till his owner's return. This, be it remembered, was my first essay in camel-riding. When next I visited the desert of Suez, six years after, I was owner of seven dromedaries, three of my own breaking, and should have been annoyed if any one had said he knew even an Arab who could ride them farther or better than I could.

During the night we arrived at No. 6 of the Transit Company's stations. I ought to have before stated that the desert road between Suez and Cairo is divided into eight portions, or stages, by seven stations; of which the even numbers, 2, 4, and 6, are refreshment houses; while the other four, the odd numbers, are merely

stables. I found there an Arab who spoke a little English, and who refused me admittance, as I had no ticket from the Company. He was very vociferous and rather insolent with his broken English; and it was not until I showed him some money that I could make him understand that I was willing to pay for admission. Conciliated by this, he showed me into a room with rough walls, and containing a chair and a sofa, but nothing else. I made a light supper off a glass of beer and a cigar, and then slept till the camels arrived. We recommenced our journey before daybreak, and rather early in the afternoon arrived at the No. 4 station, which is half way across the desert. This has some tolerable pretensions to the name of an hotel, and, at the time I speak of, was kept by a blooming young English woman,—a most unexpected plant in the middle of the barren desert. She had made a bad speculation in marrying a Copt, who had been sent over to England to learn the business of shipbuilding. It is very common at home that strange, foreign-looking people, with queer manners, are preferred to good, steady, stay-at-home Englishmen; and as the Nepaulese Princes or semi-savagized travellers go down with the higher classes, so our Egyptian carpenter appeared "some" in the eyes of this fair lady. She was really pretty, and apparently of respectable origin, for she played the piano: not that she had one in the desert, but that I saw lying about sundry folios of songs and music with her name on them. She discovered too late, as I was afterwards informed, that her good man was no Bey, as he had led her to

imagine when in England, but merely a simple journeyman carpenter. His Oriental notion that a wife should consider the solemn promises to "love, honour, and obey" her husband, which she made at the altar, as binding, did not at all suit her English idea that such promises were only made to be broken on the first opportunity. It would appear that the discovery of his true rank, the rather humiliating fact of his having a few "coups de bâton" administered shortly after his return, and, no doubt, a proper allowance of family dissensions, caused her to retire to the desert, and seek for the repose of solitude at the half-way house. I mention these circumstances in the history of our unfortunate countrywoman as a warning to others of her sex to be cautious how they are led away by long beards, foreign manners, and foreign titles. The fair sex, from Dido to the present day, have been always too ready to look upon strangers with partiality, and to say—

> "Quem sese ore ferens! quàm forti pectore, et armis!
> Credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse Deorum."

I remained at this Station during the heat of the day; and to make up for the last night's bad supper and the morning's equally slight breakfast, ordered a good dinner, and, the weather being warm, some odd bottles of porter. The consequences of this meal were so amusing, and at the same time so disagreeable, that I cannot help relating them.

My servant and baggage came up while I was at dinner; and, as I had been warned that some robberies

had lately been committed in the desert, I thought it would be prudent to look after my property, and as soon after dinner as I possibly could, started off to overtake it. It appears that Dublin stout and a dromedary trot do not agree; for before I reached the party I had a violent pain in my stomach, which increased to such a degree that I was obliged to dismount and halt for a time. My servant, Said, kept saying, "Ah che sia maladetta!" I asked him what he meant,—who was to be "maladetta." "Ah," said he, "you don't know yet what women are, I see plainly!" Not understanding what the remark had to do with the pain I was suffering, I applied for an explanation, whereupon he told me he strongly suspected that the lady I had just left, having taken a great fancy to me, had administered a powerful dose of poison to show her love. In vain I explained that, beyond ordering the dinner, and scarcely a minute's conversation at the bar, I had not even seen the fair one. Nothing would satisfy him; and even when, after having taken a few drops of sal-volatile in a glass of water, I pronounced myself perfectly convalescent and ready to proceed on the journey, he attributed my recovery to the virtue of the medicine, but persisted in his opinion that I had been poisoned.

Next morning we arrived very early at Suez, quite in time for the boat, as it afterwards proved; for though we had been hurried off from Cairo, yet she did not sail for more than a fortnight after the day fixed. The time hung heavily enough on our hands. Nowhere,

I should think, could there be found a more dreary, uninteresting spot than Suez, surrounded as it is on three sides by the desert, and on the fourth by the neck of the Red Sea, which at low water becomes a flat of damp sand, without even a single tree, shrub, or other vestige of green herb, to relieve the eye from the glare of the yellow sand.

CHAPTER III.

Suez — Population — Wells of Moses — Passage of the Israelites — An Arab boat — Fellow passengers — My berth — Self-invited guests — Mode of learning Arabic — The Sherif Mohammed Hashim — "Hum punk" — Arab seamanship — Volcanic remains of the Red Sea — Fire on board our vessel — My powder in danger — Fortunate deliverance — Mohammedan legends — Origin of jealousy — Adam with the body of Abel — Joseph the first clockmaker — El Ouéche — The Beni Hassan — The Turk and the Arab — Catching turtles — Communism in feeding — Port of Yambo — Rabba — The holy country — My dragoman Said — Arrive off Jedda — Arabs as companions.

THE population of Suez is *now* about 3000, or rather was, before the cholera of 1850, which destroyed nearly half that number. It is composed, like that of most maritime towns in the East, of a mixture of various nations. One or two Europeans only reside here as consular agents: the remainder are Turks, Arabs, Greeks, Armenians, and Copts. The provision markets are furnished mostly from Cairo; and even the water is brought from a long distance, and sold in skins, at about a penny a gallon, more or less, according to the dryness of the weather. This water has a rather brackish taste, to which, however, one soon gets accustomed. The wells of Moses, situated on the opposite shore, at a distance of from ten to twelve miles south-east of Suez, are the best: they form a most agreeable verdant oasis in the middle of a barren desert. There are several springs rising out of

a number of small hillocks. Their water is of various degrees of temperature: some (the warmest) is not considered drinkable. Here it was that Miriam, Moses' sister, sang the beautiful hymn of thanksgiving after the safe passage of the Israelites, and their enemies' destruction in the Red Sea. As for the place where they are said to have crossed, I looked upon it without any interest whatever, as it struck me at the time as very improbable that such should be the right spot. Many arguments have been adduced on both sides; but I adopt most decidedly the opinion held by some authors, of their having crossed north of Suez. The time occupied in the march from the Nile to the sea, and the position of the land whence they started, would tend to prove not only that the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea north of Suez, but also that the theory of some scientific authors, that the Isthmus of Suez is now much wider than it formerly was, is founded upon a very probable basis.

With my usual luck, I chanced at Suez to meet with a very agreeable acquaintance in an officer who had been on leave in England, having been severely wounded at Ghuznee, and who was returning to join his regiment, then stationed in India. He, like myself, had been misled as to the sailing of the steamer, and passed part of the captivity with me. Our only amusement was poking about the shores of the Red Sea, or occasionally taking a sail to the supposed place where Moses and the Israelites crossed, or to other places rendered interesting by being associated with the miraculous delivery of that

people from the hands of their oppressors. My companion left Suez on the 23rd of March by the Bombay steamer, and I two days later by a miserable Arab boat bound for Jedda. These boats are of a model which could hardly be called "ship-shape," their after-part being very much out of water, while the bows are as ridiculously close to it. They carry two masts, the foremast being much larger than the mizen. A large latteen sail is carried on the one mast in light weather; but when it comes on to blow, this is taken in, and a smaller one hoisted on the other. I say when it comes on to blow, but I mean to blow a little; for they make for the shore, and anchor, if there be anything stiffer than a moderate breeze. They never attempt to reef, nor indeed have they any means of so doing. Such was the exterior of the boat which was to bear me to Jedda—a voyage which may occupy from nine days to three months, according to the good will or opposition of the potent god Æolus. Poor old god! he must be rather sad on seeing that now-a-days his authority is confined to a portion only of those who journey on the seas; for civilized men are getting to care but little about him, since with their steamers they brave the force even of his most powerful monsoons.

But for the interior of our boat. She was filled to the deck, cabin and all, with empty rice-bags belonging to that prince of merchants, Ibrahim Pacha; the deck only remained for the passengers, and well filled it was with them and their luggage. We mustered, I should think, nearly a hundred persons of all races—Turks, Greeks, Albanians, Bedouins, Egyptians, and Negroes—

men, women, and children, all crowded together, formed a motley group—picturesque, I should perhaps have said, if it had been a little further off. Here a Turk quarrelled with a negro for his place; there a Derwish, clad in rags of every imaginable colour, and carrying a flag similarly bedecked, offered his pipe to a fierce-looking Albanian; and as for the women, they were all quarrelling: really in uncivilized countries the women are far more quarrelsome among themselves than the men. As I paid considerably more than any one else on board, I had the choice allowed me of any place I preferred; the best was occupied by a native merchant and his family, and the master of the boat and my servant were for turning them out; but they looked so snugly packed among their boxes that I could not allow of so ungallant a proceeding, and contented myself with a hole of about 5 ft. 6 in. by 3 ft. 2 in., which was scraped for me among bales and boxes, just below the mizen mast. What I lost, however, in point of comfort was amply repaid by the civility and good neighbourship of the party, who not only made themselves as agreeable as possible, but also spoke highly of me to the rest of the passengers, and thus rendered the voyage very agreeable. My den, after all, was tolerably snug, though I could not lie down full length in it; nor was the atmosphere any cooler than necessary; for to protect myself from the heat of the sun at noon, and from the dews which fell heavily during the night, I had covered it with a blanket, which was obliged to be rather low down (not quite 3 feet high), as the sail shifted over it.

The myriads of parasitical animalculæ, too, of various descriptions, which swarmed in the boat, annoyed me grievously for two or three days, but I soon got accustomed to them. Early in the morning, when the sun's heat had passed and my tent was struck, the change of air was most refreshing. One by one the passengers scraped acquaintance with me, and when my covering was removed they would come and chat with me. In this way I soon got great friends with all on board: two or three indeed of the party (the skipper was one, and a young Sherif, or lineal descendant of the Prophet, another) arrived at such a degree of intimacy that they would come and sit with me after dark when all the rest had retired. There was, however, a secret in this; they once found me drinking something, and, on inquiring what it was, I told them "sherbet of our country." On their asking permission to taste it, I said it might not be right for them to do so, though as far as I was concerned they were welcome. Notwithstanding this hint that it contained some unlawful matter, they seemed anxious to test its merits, and I allowed them to do so: the first evening it was a sip, the second a gulp, and the third a glass; rather strong "sherbet" it was too, for it contained a good proportion of rum. In this way I in a short time learnt enough of Arabic to make myself understood without the aid of an interpreter; and my friend the Sherif Mohammed Hàshim wishing to learn Italian, we mutually assisted each other. He soon made some proficiency in his studies, which he evinced by calling the captain by opprobrious names, such as

"sheep's head," "cabbages," "donkey's ears," &c., and then translating the same for his benefit. One night, the grog being a little stronger and in greater quantity than usual, he asked me what that sort of "sherbet" was called in English; I told him rum punch; he then went the round of the passengers, and, waking them out of their sleep, informed them, with many hiccups, that "hum punk" was "moldo bonio."

We had twenty-three days' voyage to Jedda, the wind being contrary during the greater part of the time. A steamer would do it perhaps in three days, and an English sailing vessel in six or seven. It struck me forcibly that Arab seamanship consists of lying to when it blows unfavourably, and not working when the wind is fair. I see such notes as the following in my original journal:—"March 29th. Anchored since yesterday off Tor, a dead calm; yesterday the wind contrary; towards afternoon favourable; later a fine breeze blowing. Remark of inquiry to Captain: that we shall probably reach Ras Mohammed before morning. Answer: that please God we shall sail in the morning if the breeze holds good till then, as they never work of a night."

Notwithstanding these precautions many boats are lost; and it has often struck me as wonderful that any arrive safe at their destination; for unprovided as they are with either charts, log, sounding lines, or other means of discovering their whereabouts, they are obliged to keep as close to the shore as possible, and trust to recognising landmarks. Such navigation would not perhaps be so dangerous were the coast pretty clear;

but the shores of the Red Sea are bordered by never-ceasing shoals of coral, many of which are barely covered by the water, and through which the boats thread their precarious course, trusting only to the rather irregular look-out kept by an Arab sailor.

The region around the Red Sea appears to contain many volcanic remains, and also a great number of mineral, or rather hot, springs. Of the latter may be mentioned the Springs of Moses, before named, the Birket Faraoun, or Pool of Pharaoh, a sulphurous spring, the springs of Hadjar-el-Ma, or "the Stone of Water," near Tor, and others, which are towards the northern extremity of the gulf. Near Lit are the springs called Sàfra, probably sulphurous also, from the name, which, applied as an adjective to water, would mean yellow: and I shall have occasion to mention my visit to that of Ailat, near Massàwa. A friend of mine at the latter place informed me that there were nearly a hundred such springs in different parts of Arabia and near the Red Sea, but that those of Ailat and Sàfra were the most esteemed for their healing properties.

In passing under the mountain at the foot of which is the Birket Faraoun, I was shown a hill opposite to it, from which is said to spring a fountain of oil (petroleum); and the hill has in consequence been called the Djebel ez Zeyt, or the Oil Mountain. I could not land to visit either of these places, as we were lying off becalmed, at a considerable distance from the shore.

Near Tor, and indeed in one or two places on the coast, I observed that the ground was spread with fossil

remains of shells and other marine objects: even some of the hills seemed to be principally formed of the same material. I do not pretend to account for the manner in which they were raised in some places a hundred or more feet above their original level; but may it not have been by some volcanic convulsion? I made particular inquiries about volcanoes, either active or dormant: one, the name of which I forget, was said to have been in action within the memory of man. The Bird Mountain, or, as it is also called, the "Djebel Dokhàn," or Smoke Mountain, is said still to emit smoke, but not fire. This is in an island south of Jedda, where is also a sulphur-mine, which the Egyptian Government either proposed to work, or, having attempted to do so, abandoned. In many places, however, on the coast the appearance of the rocks would induce a traveller, even as ignorant as myself in geological matters, to imagine that he could trace the work of the lame old blacksmith.

During the first part of our voyage we had occasionally some rather rough weather, which made our decks, especially the parts occupied by females, anything but agreeable. Once we were in imminent danger of being burnt all standing. We were lying becalmed at a considerable distance from the land. I was quietly smoking, and building castles in the air, which were destined to be scattered by the winds, even as the wreaths of smoke which ascended from my pipe, when I heard a confused noise, and mingled cries of "fire!" "water!" "he dropped a hot coal from his pipe!" &c. I felt very guilty, thinking it might be mine they were allud-

ing to: but no, *mine* was all right. The smoke, however, which was rising from the middle of the cargo, proved that all was not right *there*: and the fact was that an Albanian, seated on a pile of boxes, had dropped a lighted coal, which, finding its way between them, got at last among his Highness's empty rice-bags. What was to be done? To move the baggage was hopeless, there was such a lot of it. The only way was to souse the whole with water. This was accordingly done, but to little effect at first, for to all appearance the smoke was rapidly increasing. During the whole affair there was such confusion as was never, I believe, seen except among Arabs—the crew and greater part of the passengers of both sexes crowding near the place, each anxious to do something, and in consequence every one preventing his neighbour from doing anything. All were out of their minds with fright, which they evinced according to their different dispositions,—some screaming, some swearing, some praying. I tried to be of use; but finding that, partly from the confusion and partly from my Arabic not being over-intelligible, I could not gain a hearing, I retired quietly into my hole, and philosophically lighted another pipe, but was not long allowed to remain in peace. Several voices cried out to throw all the powder overboard; and accordingly about a pound or two was collected from the passengers and committed to the deep; and it being known that I had a good stock of that article with me, the Captain came to ask where it was, that it, as well as the rest, might be deprived of its explosive

propensities by a ducking. In answer to this inquiry I merely said "Under! under!" and pointed downwards. Now the cabin was immediately under me, and could not possibly be got at, being jammed to the door with baggage. Never did I see such a grimace of horror as the poor Captain made at the idea of being inevitably blown up. But the powder wasn't in the cabin after all! Nor had I told a lie. I had a square deal box bound with iron, containing about 38 lbs. of Pigou and Wilks's best, *under* me, for I was sitting on it at the moment. I wasn't of course going to throw it away till it was absolutely necessary, for what should I then have done in Abyssinia? My little innocent deception, however, did more good than anything else, for the Captain rushed back, swearing that there were "several cantàrs" (hundredweight) of powder among the sacks in the cabin. At this news the screams of the women, the prayers of the derwish, and the oaths and (what was of more importance) exertions of the men redoubled; and in a short time, to the great relief of all, the ship was pronounced out of danger by fire,—for the time at least. Then there was a display of all sorts of articles of ladies' and gentlemen's dresses, which were taken out of their deluged cases and hung up to dry. The water which had reached the well was pumped out, and all was quiet again. It would have been rather awkward had we been burnt there, at several miles from land, in a sea full of sharks, and with a very small canoe (at best capable of carrying only ten persons) as our only means of escape.

The evening of the 31st of March saw us anchored off Ras Mohammed, and next day we set sail again, but owing to contrary winds made but little progress, anchoring for the night in a picturesque creek. On the 2nd of April we crossed for the Gulf of Akaba, with a fair wind and a heavy sea running. To while away the time my friend the Sherif and others related to me some stories from their version of the Old Testament. They ascribed the origin of jealousy as well as other sins to the first woman. When Adam and Eve were in Paradise they were for some time a most happy couple (it may be supposed for a month or two, like most married couples). Adam was in the habit of going every evening to heaven to pray. The Devil, who had studied the female mind and knew its weak points, thought that the introduction of jealousy might be a good foundation whereon to build much mischief. So he went to Eve, and, after propitiating her by well-timed flattery, he inquired after Adam. Eve replied by informing him whither her husband was gone. At this the Devil smiled incredulously, but said nothing; and even when our first mother pressed him to tell her the meaning of his smile, refused to answer for a time, feigning that he would not hurt her feelings, or injure the reputation of his friend. This conduct was only additional evidence of his profound acquaintance with the weaknesses of the female heart, for by so acting he wrought strongly on her curiosity as well as her suspicion, till at last, having worked her up to a state of mind capable of receiving any lies he might choose to

tell her, he informed her, with every appearance of sorrow, that Adam was deceiving her, and paying his addresses to another lady. At this Eve laughed scornfully, saying, "How can this be? for I know that there is no woman created except myself!" The Devil again smiled with an expression of pity. "Alas! poor thing," said he, "if I show you another woman, will that undeceive you?" She assented, and he showed her a mirror! Eve was of course completely deceived, though no doubt she thought herself *un*deceived.

I need not describe the scene which ensued. My readers will all understand what sort of a reception Adam was likely to meet with on his return; and hence was the beginning of domestic dissensions and curtain lectures. A moral, however, may be deduced from this rather absurd story. From want of experience of what is going on in the world the fair sex are easily led. The Devil always finds means to awaken suspicion when it is likely to be received, either by making common events appear "*suspicious circumstances*," or by prompting a "kind friend" (plenty of whom are always ready for such service) to inform the poor female that she is sadly ill-treated; and thus many otherwise happy couples are, like our first parents, urged into a line of conduct which deprives them of even the few sweets which are allowed to man in this world.

"Poor race of men! said the pitying spirit,
Dearly ye pay for your primal fall:
Some flow'rets of Eden ye still inherit;
But the trail of the Serpent is over them all!"

When Adam found the murdered body of Abel, not knowing what to do with it, he carried it about on his shoulders for twenty days. Allah, at last taking pity on him, sent a crow, which likewise carried its dead offspring on its back. The crow flew before Adam, till, coming to some sand, it scratched a hole and buried its young. Adam saw it, and did the same.

To Joseph is assigned by tradition the invention of clocks; they say that he constructed one with wooden works when in prison in Egypt. The story of his early life is nearly the same as our own. They state, however, that the sum paid for him by Potiphar, who was a captain in the "Nizam" of Pharaoh's army, was 25 paras, equivalent to about 1½*d.* English money.

In the afternoon of the 4th of April we arrived at El Ouéche. This is an Arab village at some distance from the shore: but they have a sort of bazár or market on the beach for the convenience of vessels, which usually stop here and take in a supply of provisions and water. Many of the pilgrims returning from Mecca prefer coming hither by land and crossing over to Cosseir; thence by the desert to Keneh, on the Nile; whence they take boat to Cairo. There were many persons now waiting to cross. I was struck by the clearness of the water, which from its bright blue colour put me in mind of the Lake of Geneva. Multitudes of fish, of every shape, size, and colour, attracted by the bits thrown overboard, shoaled round the vessel; they, in their turn, were lures to a number of gulls, divers, and cormorants, who fearlessly perched on our vessel

and rigging, waiting the moment to pounce upon their prey.

On the 6th of April we arrived off Djebel Hassan. Here one of my friends, a young Arab of the tribe of Beni Hassan, left me; he was a very good youth, and son of one of the chiefs. I had had many conversations with him respecting his tribe and the Bedouins in general. The Beni Hassan are, however, for the most part fishermen, only a few wandering inland. On this account they would be looked upon, no doubt, as having degenerated from the true habits of the migratory tribes. Notwithstanding my religion, against which the Bedouins are in general more prejudiced than even the people of Mecca or Medina, this youth had become exceedingly friendly with me, and asked me to visit him in his country, promising that I should be well received, and that he would give me in marriage his second sister, the prettiest girl in the tribe. A young Turk, who was standing by, asked in a rather insolent manner if he would give him as good a reception, should he come. To this the Arab replied by passing his hand across his throat, which drew a laugh from the bystanders, while the Turk, muttering, sneaked away. Indeed the Arabs hate the Turks, looking upon them as their natural enemies; being, too, of a different sect, they have not even religious sympathy for each other.

After having left Djebel Hassan a few hours, we passed a couple of turtles basking together on the water. A man instantly jumped overboard, though we were running at a great pace, with a fine breeze blowing.

The Arab, who was a splendid swimmer, soon reached the turtles, and kept them from diving by turning their fore flappers upwards, till one or two more hands came to his assistance. The boat was hove to, and the canoe sent off to pick them up, and all arrived safe on board. They proved of a good size, and their shells valuable. In the evening their flesh was made into a sort of soup, or rather stew, of which I was invited to partake. It was in one large wooden bowl, round which sat about twenty convives. My own black servant sat next to me, and every one dipped his hand, armed with a piece of bread, into the same dish. At the time of my voyage to Jedda this sort of communism in feeding was rather extraordinary to me; but since that time I have for years been in the constant habit of "dipping my finger in the dish" with niggers, and think even now that that mode of eating is far more convenient, and, as it is practised in the East, quite as cleanly as the use of knives and forks; and, after all, "fingers were made first."

Nothing of interest occurred during the remainder of our voyage. We passed the port of Yambo. This is a large village, in which I remarked nothing particular to distinguish it from any other Arab village of the Red Sea, except that it is surrounded by a very slight wall, and that, if possible, it is fuller of dates, flies, and stinks than most of them.

Three days after we put into Rabba. This is on the northern frontier of the holy country called Hedjaz, from its being the land of pilgrimage; or perhaps the name

would be better derived from the flight of the Prophet, whence is dated the Mohammedan era. Here the pilgrims cast off their old garments, and with them their worldly thoughts, and put on white robes. The niggers, of whom we had several on board, became wonderfully sedate and godly, to the great amusement of my dragoman, Said, who, though a nigger himself, and a Mussulman by birth, had, from having mixed all his life with Europeans, imbibed so much of their ideas in spiritual matters (perhaps still more in spirit*uous* matters), that he cared not much whether he was considered Mussulman or Christian. In fact, poor fellow! had he lived, he intended settling in Abyssinia and turning Christian. But àraky (native spirits), to which he was much addicted, prevented his carrying out his good intentions. He died in Cairo in 1847, after quitting my service. The evening we arrived at Rabba he asked me leave to go ashore. On my inquiring what for, he said to change his clothes and his habits; but the facetious twinkle of his eye induced me to believe that he was not a true penitent: however, as long as he did his duty, what was that to me? I gave him leave, and he returned very late; I suspected rather the worse for liquor.

The next day we arrived in sight of Jedda; and although, from the kindness and good humour of my fellow passengers, the voyage had been passed rather agreeably, still we were all very glad when the look-out announced that the minarets of the town were visible. The Arabs in general are easily managed. They are at

first disposed to be troublesome in their curiosity, and occasionally rather insolent; but if they see that the traveller is inclined to make himself agreeable and to bear with them, they are always ready to meet him more than half way.

CHAPTER IV.

Jedda — The British Consul — Eastern towns — Native dress — The Fettah el Kheyr — Cockroaches — Souàkin — M. Vignon — Native duels — Mode of treating doctors — Fish — Massàwa — Angelo the Jew — The Kaimagàm — The climate of Massàwa — Its inhabitants and houses — My host — My costume in the East.

FROM the sea the town of Jedda appears to great advantage. The white houses and minarets are always striking objects in a tropical climate, especially when contrasted with the blue sky, and its reflection on the equally blue water. The entrance to the inner harbour is rendered extremely difficult by a triple row of coral reefs, just covered by the water, among which a vessel standing inward has to thread her way through a narrow and zigzag passage. The larger class of ships trading between this port and Bombay remain outside; even our small boat touched three times before we effected an entrance. I was right glad to find myself ashore, even at Jedda, and soon found my way to the house of our worthy consul, Mr. A. C. Ogilvy, to whom I bore a letter of introduction. As a friend of his friend I was most kindly received, though my being such was, I believe, only an excuse to himself for exercising his natural hospitality. On my requesting him to be kind enough to advise me where I should be best lodged, he appeared half offended, and forced me, though not at all

contrary to my inclinations, to remain in his house till I should be obliged to leave Jedda. I accordingly spent a most agreeable fortnight under his roof, till a boat bound for the coast of Abyssinia left the port. The life which our excellent countryman leads in this out-of-the-way spot must of necessity be anything but pleasant. The only European resident besides himself is the French consul, a gentleman of first-rate talents, but whose tastes differing from our countryman's, they are not quite so much together as they otherwise might be.

During my stay I visited several native houses in the town, and took frequent walks in the neighbourhood. There is nothing of very great interest in either the one or the other. I had made a plan for visiting Mecca, in which some of my former friends of the boat had joined me; but I was dissuaded by the consul, who told me that the risk of being kept there till I consented to profess Mohammedanism was far too great to be repaid by anything I might see during my transitory visit.

One day while walking on the beach I saw some fishermen drawing in their nets, and was astonished at the extraordinary variety, both in shape and colour, of the fish they had caught. Many of them were of the most brilliant hues: one in particular was striped scarlet and a bright ultra-marine blue. I tried to preserve some by skinning them; but the entire loss of the brilliancy of their colouring so much dispirited me that I gave up the attempt. A naturalist provided with glass bottles for spirits might, doubtless, in a short time

make a valuable ichthyological collection at the Red Sea.

The town has been compared by a former writer to the "whited sepulchres" of Scripture, which are described as fair outside but filthy within: so, indeed, is Jedda. The favourable opinion which the traveller forms of its exterior as he approaches it from the sea is soon dissipated as he picks his way through the filth that in many places is allowed to remain thickly strewed in the narrow alleys which in all Oriental cities are the substitutes for streets. I may well say "in *all* Oriental cities," for those modernised according to European plans can hardly be considered as any longer such. But I am not certain whether in this point, as in many others, I do not disapprove of our Western ideas being adopted too generally. There are reasons for the customs of every nation, which in most cases refer to some peculiarity of the climate. The adoption, for instance, of tight trousers and a buttoned-up frock-coat in the East is as ridiculous as wearing a negro's clothing would be in England. Again, broad streets are very well for carriages, and on this account only can they be recommended in a hot climate. Some persons unacquainted with the mode of building adopted in these countries might suppose that they are required for ventilation; but they will not be needed for this purpose so long as the old Oriental fashion of having an open court-yard in the centre of each dwelling is adhered to. In the dark, dull climate of England broad streets are indispensable to give us light, warmth, and cheerful-

ness. In Cairo, on the contrary, where all is sun, little narrow alleys of about four feet wide, and running between houses of four stories high, are as useful, for exactly the opposite reason; for the projecting windows in many parts meeting, the sun scarcely sees the road for five minutes in the whole day, and in consequence they are delightfully cool and shady. If I had to plan a town in a warm climate, it should consist of very few broad streets, and as many court-yards as possible. On the whole, Jedda is a tolerably well-built town, having its bazàrs, mosques, dates, flies, filth, &c., in common with every town in these longitudes. It is, I believe, rather unhealthy; though during the time of my stay, there appeared to be no particular prevalence of disease. The "yemen sores" are very common in all the neighbourhood. This is a most terrible disease, especially if not attended to in time. The state of the blood appears to be much affected by the climate, and boils break out (often in the legs), which increase gradually, till at last they become large sloughing ulcers, which eat away to the bone. Mortification not unfrequently ensues; and then, if there be a man at hand skilful in the use of the knife and saw, you are in luck, though you lose a limb; if not, all is soon over. These boils seldom, I believe, if ever, come spontaneously, but generally arise from the neglect of some slight scratch, which in itself appears to be too trivial to be cared for. I suffered considerably myself from them; but having a little knowledge of the healing art, I overcame them, though with difficulty.

Jedda is surrounded by a wall sufficiently strong to resist the attacks of the Bedouin, but useless against artillery. The country immediately round it is an open tract of sand without a vestige of herbage; but farther inland, especially in the direction of Mecca, several hills are to be seen. Water is scarce, as it can only be procured from a distance; nor is it always very good or wholesome. The markets are tolerably well supplied with vegetables, brought from the interior; the chief sorts of which are water-melons, pumpkins, cucumbers, sweet potatoes (goulgas), onions, &c. For fruit, they have small apricots, lemons, oranges, pomegranates, banánas, and last, but not least in quantity, dates. The population varies, I should say, from 15,000 to 50,000, according to the number of pilgrims which may be there. The costumes to be seen are of course very numerous, as natives of all the Mohammedan nations flock to the pilgrimage. The dress of the natives of the country differs but slightly from the Egyptian: the Bedouin Arabs, however, substitute the "abaia," or hair cloak, for the jibba; and a "kofíya," or handkerchief, usually of red, with yellow and gold border and fringe, is worn by them on the head instead of the turban. For weapons, they use a long gun and a crooked knife or creese, called "jembíya."

I left Jedda on the 8th of May, and got on board the fast-sailing good ship Fettah el Kheyr; captain and owner, Omar Hamdan. We were delayed on board for two days, waiting for the skipper to come off, or (as he explained it on his arrival) for the wind. With a fair breeze and plenty of sea running, we steered on the 10th

for Souàkin, on the opposite coast. Most boats bound for Massàwa make Gonfouda and Hodeida on their way thither; but the Fettah el Kheyr was engaged to carry salt-bags to Souàkin. The description we had received of our boat was in some respects true, in others very false: she was long and narrow, but, even when laden, remarkably high out of water. Her owner appeared to have gained some ideas from the Indian traders which frequent the port of Jedda, for her rig had some small affinity to that of a brigantine; it was a hybrid between that class of vessel and a felucca. Her sailing qualities were not altogether overrated, for when running she was decidedly fast, though she was sadly wanting when the wind was anything but "*à puppa*." In these cases she fully answered the purposes of a bathing machine, being as often under water as above it. For her other qualities, her great safety appeared to depend on her bottom being constructed much after the fashion of the Irishman's shoes, which had holes in the soles, whereby the water ran out as fast as it got in. My accommodation was nominally superior to that I enjoyed in the Bakhita, for I had half of the cabin under the poop, the other half being occupied by some slaves belonging to a merchant on board. But it must not be understood that the cabin was elegantly furnished, as in a yacht or steamer; it was merely a space in the vessel, the bare planks which surrounded it being not even planed; and the swarms of cockroaches and other insects with which it was filled were its only furniture. The want of air, too, rendered it the abode of bad smells and excessive

heat, the former of which were partly owing to a very primitive sort of quarter gallery, the access to which was just at my bed head. During the whole of the voyage I preferred sleeping on deck with the other passengers. The only drawback to this was that in the morning we were all literally wet through with the dew, and that the facetious cockroaches amused themselves greatly at our expense; for, awaking in the night, we were sure to find one poking its head into each nostril, others in the ears, mouth, &c.; and it was almost impossible to drink, from the myriads which swarmed on the mouths of the leather bottles used for carrying and cooling water. The food we ate, too, and everything else, was full of these disgusting insects; and notwithstanding all the care of the cook, I seldom sat down to dinner without eating two or three by mistake, especially if stewed prunes, to which they nearly assimilate in size and colour, happened to be served.

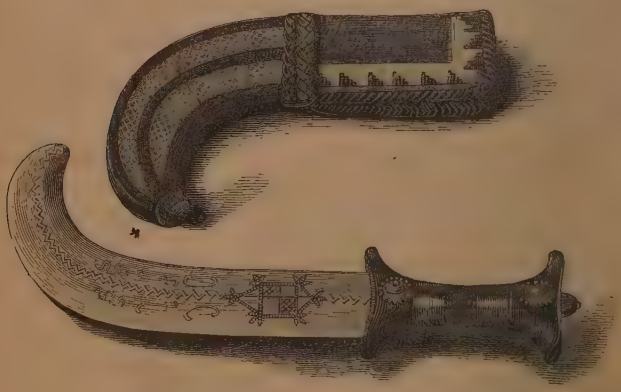
On the 15th we neared Souàkin, having crossed by mistake to a point a considerable distance off. As we arrived in the evening, we lay outside till morning: another vessel lay near us, outward bound. After we had been anchored some time, she sent a boat off to us, requesting me to visit a French gentleman who was lying on board her sick of a fever. I immediately went to him, and found it was a M. Vignon, who had been for some time in Abyssinia as draughtsman to a scientific expedition, sent there for commercial and other investigations. He had, poor fellow! already lost three of his companions by illness or accident, one only besides

himself surviving; and I could not help feeling that this journey, to which no doubt he had looked forward with the greatest pleasure as that which was to carry him, after all his dangers and fatigues, to rest happy and most deservedly renowned among his countrymen and friends, would probably be soon finished. The mark of death was on him. He had mounted a dromedary to visit some ruins near Souàkin; the animal was young and hot, and he, being unaccustomed to camel-riding, was thrown on his chest. In these climates a little thing is sufficient to produce fever, and I found him lying on the deck, evidently in a hopeless state. I furnished him with some medicine and other little comforts which he asked of me, and left him late, promising to visit him in the morning early, as he wished to be bled. I did not think it would be good for him; but as he persisted, I promised to come, though I had resolutely refused to bleed him in the evening, as the dew was falling fast and the sun had long set. The fulfilment of my promise was, however, prevented; for though I kept watch all night lest I should oversleep myself, at three o'clock I saw his vessel making sail, and our boat, which had since the previous evening been ashore with the skipper, was not yet come off. The sails of his ship flapped a mournful adieu, and then filling, a steady breeze soon bore her far from us. Poor Vignon! I heard of his death at Jedda shortly after my arrival at Massàwa. When his vessel left us I could almost have mourned him as an old friend, though I had seen but little of him; his wretched fate had awak-

ened in my breast strong feelings of sympathy; for I reflected that such would probably be my end also, sooner or later, such being the lot of most of those whom science, curiosity, or a wandering taste lures under the fatal branches of that most deadly of all upas-trees, "African discovery."

As soon as the skipper came off we stood in, and in a short time anchored in the harbour of Souàkin. The town consists of two mosques, a few stone houses, including that of the Governor, and a number of huts, which extend along the beach of the mainland. The hills to the right of the town, looking from the harbour, form a beautiful distance from their picturesque outline. The plain, too, may be said to be a step above the neighbourhood of Jedda in fertility, though it cannot boast of much except by comparison; a solitary date-palm in the town and a few stunted bushes rising out of the sand being all the vegetation that I saw. Thus much I observed from the boat; my sore legs, with which I was still grievously afflicted, taking away all inclination to land in so sandy and dusty a neighbourhood. The Governor of the place was a Galla slave of Osman Pacha, then Governor of Jedda; his name was Yussuf Aga. Hearing that a European was on board, who was prevented from visiting him by infirmity, he was civil enough to come off in state and call upon me; he made himself very agreeable, and remained with me for some time, chatting on the affairs of Egypt. After he had left me I sent him a small telescope as a present, and he in return sent me a supply of fresh provisions

for the remainder of the journey, consisting of about twenty fowls and other necessaries. There being many sick persons on board, I got into a rather extensive medical and surgical practice. One man came off to have some wounds on his shoulders patched up; he had been fighting a duel, and I never saw any one more terribly mauled than he was. The mode of fighting here is rather a good one, as it seldom endangers life: instead of the straight lancet-pointed knife worn by most of the tribes of Upper Egypt, the Souàkin people carry one the point of which is brought back like a hook, and which, though sharpened on either side, is so



Knife worn by the people of Souàkin.

much crooked as to render it difficult to inflict a severe wound with it. Armed with these weapons the combatants stand opposite to each other, stripped to the waist, and hack away over one another's shoulders, till one, tired of the fun, fainting from loss of blood, or giving up, is pronounced vanquished. While doctoring

him, a bystander remarked that I should be careful, as the people of Souàkin looked upon doctors as altogether responsible for the life of their patients. A story is related that in former times a Syrian, who had hoped that his brains might aid him to fill his belly, came to set up as a doctor in these out-of-the-way parts. Unluckily one of the first patients he was called upon to attend was an Arab, who had suffered some severe accident; the doctor applied the lancet, and in a few minutes after the man died. Whether it so happened that he cut the artery by mistake, or whether the man was dying when he began, I know not. The friends of the deceased took the poor doctor, who, being judged by public opinion to be guilty of the patient's death, was also condemned to die; and so, according to my informant, they took him outside the town, and chopped him into small pieces. It is fortunate that in England society is more civilized than at Souàkin; for were death the reward of every medical man who, either from ill luck or ignorance, killed his patient, I fear we should have many more such executions to put down to our national score than have even the natives of Souàkin.

The inhabitants of Souàkin and its neighbourhood are called Hadarba, and their language Hadandàwy. Their origin is probably the same as that of the great tribe of Bisharin, which inhabits the whole of the eastern desert from Upper Egypt to the northern frontier of Abyssinia. In manners, appearance, and costume, however, like the inhabitants of most commercial seaport towns in these countries, they differ considerably from the parent

stock, owing to their intercourse with other nations, from whom they have borrowed, not only some ideas, but also some blood. Ivory, ostrich-feathers, and such-like produce, brought from the interior by the Arabs, appear to be among the principal articles of export trade. The former are brought from all parts of Nubia, and many of the Hadarba (a truly commercial race) go even to Musselamya, on the Blue Nile, and to Kordofan to effect their purchases. We saw a large quantity of these articles being weighed at the Custom-house, opposite to us.

On the 17th we sailed; but, as not unfrequently occurs to a traveller who is anxious to reach his destination, the wind, which had been in a favourable quarter so long as we remained in port, shifted about the day we set sail. The weather was, however, very fine, sometimes quite calm, and so of an evening we amused ourselves by fishing. One night we caught thirty-one rock-cod, averaging about 12lbs. each, and a few more fish of a larger size, but inferior quality. The cod are red-coloured like mullet, and are esteemed the best fish of the Red Sea; they are, however, but poor flabby things, compared with the fish of our colder latitudes. Numbers of sharks were in calm weather to be seen about the vessel, but from want of proper tackle we did not succeed in catching any of them, although one hungry fellow ran off with the hook and part of a line.

At length, by dint of dodging about in the most lubberly manner, we arrived one fine evening in the bay of Massàwa. I tumbled into a boat, and got on shore

immediately. On the beach I was accosted by a queer-looking white man, who had come down to inquire for letters or messages from Jedda or Cairo. He addressed me in pretty good Italian, and thence I conjectured him to be an European; but in truth he was the oddest-looking fish I ever had seen out of water. His costume consisted of a very seedy Turkish suit, without the usual accompaniment of linen, a pair of what had once been red slippers on his toes, and a red cap, nearly black, with a shred at the top to mark where once had depended a blue silk tassel. He could not be a Mussulman—he was too dirty. Could he be a Christian? He decidedly had no appearance of it. Nothing remained then but that he must be an Israelite. While he yet spoke to me, these reflections had passed through my mind, and I remembered that Mr. Ogilvy had told me of a Jew named Angelo, who he doubted not would put me in the way of anything I wanted at Massàwa. Seizing on this notion, I asked him the question point blank, and told him of the Consul's recommendation. He replied with much politeness, that "for the sake of *his friend the Consul* he would be happy to show me any attention in his power." Accordingly he commenced by inviting me to pass the night at the house of the French consular agent, which he had in charge during its owner's absence. I accepted his invitation till lodgings should be procured for me, and we then started towards the town. On the way he suggested that it would be as well to pay our respects to his Excellency the Governor, and so we turned down a narrow

lane till we arrived at his residence. We were shown into a shed, surrounded by a sort of mud bench, on which were squatted a number of sailors, merchants, and others. The Governor (or as he is called "Kaimagàm") of Massàwa is a white slave of the Pacha of Jedda, named Rustoum Aga. The rank of Kaimagàm is in the regular Turkish or Egyptian army equivalent to Lieutenant-Colonel, but in the irregular troops merely means a petty governor or tax-collector of a village, his rank of course depending on the amount of authority which he can exercise and the number of troops under his command. Rustoum Aga has thirty Albanians with him. In the provinces of Sennaar each village has its Kaimagàm, who is merely a private soldier in the service of the Cashif of the district. His Excellency received us but coolly. Angelo went to him and spoke on business of his own, while I was left to find a seat among the sailors at the opposite end of the room. The fact is, my costume was not of the most elegant; and, as in all countries people are judged either by their dress or by their company, it was not likely that Rustoum would form a very high opinion of me, appearing as I did. After having made our salàm we proceeded to the French consul's town-house. Like all the best houses in Massàwa, we found it to consist of a large yard, in which were a square building of rough stone, as a warehouse for goods, and a few wicker sheds for dwelling. The inferior houses are all of the latter class. The first impression one naturally receives is that their owners must be very ignorant of architecture.

This is true enough as far as it goes, but it is the climate which has taught them that sheds tolerably well thatched, and with the sides either entirely or nearly open, are the only sort of habitable houses. In a conversation about the comparative heat of different places, an officer of the Indian navy remarked that he believed Pondicherry to be the hottest place in India, but still that it was nothing to Aden, while again Aden was a trifle to Massàwa. He compared the climate of the first to a hot bath; that of the second to a furnace; while the third, he said, could be equalled in temperature by nothing but [illegible], a place which he had never visited, and which it is to be hoped neither he nor any of us will. Towards the latter end of the month of May I have known the thermometer rise to about 120° Fahrenheit in the shade, and in July and August it ranges much higher. Such a climate is of course most unhealthy,—especially so during the summer months, when a number of dangerous diseases prevail, such as dysentery and the usual fevers of the tropical countries. The island is a mere rock of coral, without a vestige of vegetation to enliven its bare face. There are cisterns for collecting the rain-water (no spring existing), but most of these have been allowed to fall into disuse, and the inhabitants of the island are obliged to trust to Arkiko, a village on the mainland, distant some three or four miles, for their supply. This water, moreover, is rather brackish. The extreme heat of the place would not appear extraordinary to any one acquainted with its position. Massàwa is open on the one side to the sea, while the other is shut in by an

amphitheatre of distant hills,—sufficiently near, however, to prevent its receiving a breath of air from that direction, but, on the contrary, to collect, as it were, the rays of the sun into the narrow slip of land they enclose.

The village is situated on the western extremity of the island, which is scarcely a mile long, measured from east to west, by not quite half that breadth. The eastern portion of it is occupied by the burial-ground, a guard-house, and the cisterns I have just noticed. The costume of the people is adapted to the climate. Out of doors the men wear a long shirt, and some even a caftan of silk or cloth. Their head-dress consists either of a tarbùsh (or red cap), or of an embroidered white skull-cap, wrapped round with a muslin turban. Indoors most of these articles of show are laid aside, and the men wear a light cotton napkin about their loins and a skull-cap on their heads. Then, stretched on a serrír (or couch), covered with a piece of hide or a mat, they take a *natural hot-air bath.* The women are as lightly clad; a napkin of striped cotton round their loins, and when out of doors a large blue "milaya" (or sheet), with which they cover themselves after the manner of all women of the East, being their costume.

The people of Massàwa are, as would be naturally expected, rather weak, and wanting in energy. Their subsistence is derived entirely from commerce,—a line of life particularly suited to such a climate, as affording them means of employing and amusing the mind, while at the same time the body is enjoying "otium cum dignitate," stretched out on the benches of a café. I have

heard many Europeans speak of the severe effect the heat had on them. Strange to say, during the short time I passed at Massàwa I never suffered at all. The whole day was spent by me in running about, either catching insects in the sun, or otherwise actively employing myself, while my servants were thrown down in the shade with the perspiration running off them in streams. After I had been two days at Massàwa, the house of Housséin Effendi, scribe to the Government, was procured for me. It is situated on the sea-shore, and consists of two courts, one of which contains a "marabba" (a square stone magazine) and a wicker shed; the other has two more sheds, pleasantly situated on the beach. One of these latter was lately erected for the wedding of the Effendi's son. It is very tastefully built, and at one end is the bridal couch, which is perched up several feet above the ground, like the berth of a steamer, and having a small entrance like a pigeon-house. Its sides are neatly made of canes, laid so as to form various patterns. This hut has a window on to the sea, and was about the only place where I could obtain a breath of air during my whole stay; and that, too, was very warm. The stone "marabbas" of which I have spoken are built as a protection against fire; for the rest of the town being formed entirely of sticks and straw, it is not at all wonderful that every now and then the whole is burnt to the ground. It would, however, be impossible to live in stone walls. Having one day to arrange some of my goods for convenience in travelling, we went into the magazine to do so. The heat was so oppressive,

that my native servants, though stripped to the skin (with the exception of a small napkin for decency's sake), were unable to remain many minutes at a time inside, and were literally melting with perspiration. The whole furniture of my room consisted of the before-mentioned "serrír." This is a sort of couch or stretcher, being an oblong frame of wood placed on four legs, and covered in some cases with strips of hide, crossing one another so as to form a seat, or of cords made of the fibres of the date-palm. These latter are more used by the people of the Arabian coast. The sailors make them very neatly, dyeing the cords of various colours, and then placing them across the "serrír," so as to form patterns.

My friend Angelo made himself very agreeable during my stay. He was a perfect oddity of his kind—a great boaster, and consequently a little doer. He was once relating to me the horrors of Abyssinian travel (he had been to Àdoua, on a mercantile speculation). In the course of his story, after a host of dangers by lions and other wild beasts, he told me of a most fierce attack on his person and property by a large troop of banditti. He described their onslaught most graphically, showing with gestures the threatening postures assumed by each one of the assailants; and then seizing a broomstick, "I took my gun," said he, "and put myself in a posture of defence." This position was, as he illustrated it, that into which the front ranks of infantry soldiers place themselves when formed in square to receive cavalry. "My appearance, and the expression of deter-

mination which I put on, completely terrified the robbers, who took to their heels precipitately. Had I been a person with only an ordinary degree of courage, I should have been murdered on the spot." His son, who up to this point had been sitting quietly listening to this piece of paternal bombast, now "put a stopper" to it by saying, in the coolest manner imaginable, "Now, father, what is the use of your going on lying in this manner, when every one knows that you have not the courage of a mouse?" The indulgent father said nothing, but set about to prepare for dinner. If courage and cleanliness were not his predominant virtues, perseverance in his business certainly was one. I have frequently sat in his shop watching the passers-by, thinking of the past and planning for the future, while the worthy little man was dealing out farthing-worths of pepper or ha'p'orths of sugar; but even with me, who in some measure might have been considered in the light of his guest, he had always an eye to business. In the middle of one of my reveries he would break in with "A first-rate article that, Sir. Is 't not elegant? I shall be happy to oblige you as a friend, and let you have it at cost price." After some explanation it proved that he alluded to a rather shabby-looking decanter, which, happening to be opposite me, he thought I was admiring. Thus, with his society, catching insects, and receiving the calls of a heterogeneous mass of acquaintance, I passed ten days at Massàwa, when, having completed the necessary arrangements, I thought it time to make a start for the interior. One part of these ar-

rangements, and truly a very essential one, was to divest myself of every needless incumbrance, and pack up my stores in a safe place. Accordingly, my best articles of European dress were offered to my friend Angelo, as a recompense for his kindness. I had already given away a large portion at Cairo, and now possessed only three Turkish shirts, three pair of drawers, one suit of Turkish clothes for best occasions, a pair of sandals, and a red cap. From the day I left Suez (March 25, 1843), till about the same time in the year 1849, I never wore any article of European dress, nor indeed ever slept on a bed of any sort,—not even a mattress; the utmost extent of luxury which I enjoyed, even when all but dying of a pestilential fever that kept me five months on my beam-ends at Khartoum, was a coverlid under a rug. The red cap I wore on leaving Massàwa was soon *borrowed* of me, and the sandals after a month were given up; and so, as I have before said in the Introduction, for more than three years (that is till I reached Khartoum) I wore no covering to my head, except a little butter, when I could get it; nor to my feet, except the horny sole which a few months' rough usage placed under them. During the whole of this time I never had a headache, though exposed to the sun at all hours of the day, and was never foot-sore, though I walked constantly in the roughest imaginable places.

CHAPTER V.

The Naïb's Guide-Tax — Moncullou — A way-side bath — Snakes — Elephants — Lions.

I HAD made up my mind to pay a short visit to Ailat,— a hot mineral spring a day's journey from Massàwa,— where I hoped to benefit my sore legs (which were not yet quite healed), and at the same time amuse myself with the chase, for which that neighbourhood is justly celebrated. I accordingly sent for the Naïb (or Governor of that part of the mainland which lies along the coast immediately opposite to Massàwa, and which has for a long time past been considered as tributary to the Ottoman empire), in order to make friends with him, and at the same time demand his assistance in procuring for me camels to carry my baggage, a mule to carry myself, and a guide for the whole concern. It is customary for every traveller, whether a native or a foreigner, who may have to pass the Naïb's territory, either in coming from Abyssinia to Massàwa, or the reverse, to take a guide from the Bedouin Arabs, who are called "Saho" or "Shoho," for which he pays half a dollar. This tax is a regular imposition, the road being neither dangerous nor difficult to find; but as by this custom money is brought into the country, and probably also into the hands of the Naïb (who, no

doubt, has a good understanding with the "Dellîl" or "Merrahît," as the guide is called), it is not allowed to be given up. The present Naïb Yehya is an old man, said to be friendly to the English interest; but being from his age more or less incapacitated for business, his son Mohammed looks after the government in his stead, in which indeed the father has only been lately reinstated, having from political motives been superseded for some time by his rival Naïb Hassan. Mohammed very soon paid me a visit, was extremely civil and polite, and promised to make every arrangement necessary for my departure on the morrow. I gave him a muslin turban as a present, and we parted the greatest friends possible. Accordingly on the following day I set out about three o'clock, crossing in a ferry-boat from the island to a point on the mainland which serves as a pier or landing-place. Here I observed lying on the ground a stone capital and some fragments of an ancient column, which, on inquiry, I was informed were brought from one of the neighbouring islands (I believe "Dhalac"), where many similar ones are to be found. I also heard that the ruins of what was supposed to be an ancient Christian convent are to be seen on the coast not far distant. On landing we were disappointed at finding that our animals had not arrived; and as I was too anxious to see a little of the mainland to remain waiting for them, I left my servant with the baggage, and set out on foot alone for the village of Moncullou, where the French Consul and Hussein Effendi with other merchants have their coun-

try-houses, and where it had been arranged that we were to pass the evening. The first part of my road lay through a flat sandy country, partially overgrown, in some places, with stunted shrubs, many of which appeared to me to be very curious; but not being a botanist, I could form no decided opinion of their merits. Among them was a shrub which bears a round orange-coloured fruit, in shape and appearance much resembling the colocynth, and which, when dried, is in this country used for making snuff-boxes, the seeds having first been carefully extracted. The whole air was alive with insects of every variety both in species and hue, many of them most brilliantly coloured; and as I advanced farther inland, I observed two or three different varieties of sun-birds, — one kind of a dark-brown colour, excepting his throat, which is scarlet, and his head, which is changing-green and purple; another, almost all changing-green, with a bright canary-coloured breast, and two long feathers in his tail. Wandering on, I came to a place where the sea runs in like a creek, and, seeing a copse of fine bay-trees overhanging the water's edge, and so completely surrounding and shading a little corner as entirely to screen any one who might bathe in it both from the view of passers-by and the more trying glance of the sun above, I took the opportunity of refreshing myself and paying to the salt water my last visit for many years. The water was about five feet deep, with a smooth sand bottom. Nothing could be more delicious,—far preferable to the finest marble swimming-bath in Europe. Having bathed, I proceeded on my

way, and soon after saw the man with the camels descending to meet us at the point where we landed: telling him to follow with my servant as fast as possible, and inquiring if I was in the right road, to which he replied "All right," I continued my march. Excited to the highest pitch by the workings of my fertile imagination, which induced me to expect every moment to tumble into a Happy Valley, I almost ran along, bearing such a load of castles in my head as would have puzzled Hercules to carry, had they been constructed of any other material than air. Thus I trudged on, full of everything I saw, till, on arriving at three roads, I found myself at a loss which to pursue, as they all appeared to take nearly the same direction: so remembering the old adage, "medio tutissimus ibis," I chose the centre one, which seemed to be the most trodden; or rather, like Don Quixote's good old hack, I took the first that came, and followed it, thinking of nothing in my happy state of mind till I suddenly observed that the sun was gone down; and as in these countries there is no twilight to speak of, it struck me that I had no time to lose if I did not wish to be caught in the dark. I therefore quickened my step till, half an hour afterwards, finding no Moncullou, nor any sound or sign of humanity to warrant me in the supposition that I was near it, I concluded that I had overshot my mark, for at Massàwa I had been informed that it was only an hour's journey, whereas I had been walking fast for double that time. I therefore decided on employing the last remnants of light in preparing myself some corner

wherein to sleep, and was just poking about with this intention when I heard voices approaching me, and running towards them was met by five little slave-girls returning to the village with wood they had been collecting. I accompanied them, and in a short time arrived at the house of Hussein Effendi, where, having been provided with milk and other refreshments, I was told that the French Consul's lady had sent to request me to pass the night at her house, whither my beasts had preceded me.

But I must mention a little adventure which I had when within a few hundred paces of Hussein Effendi's house, and which might have proved disagreeable. It happened that I was walking with one of the little girls in advance of the others, when, putting my foot (which, with the exception of sandals, was quite bare) near an object that in the dusk had the appearance of a bit of stick or a stone, I was startled by feeling something cold glide over it, and, turning, saw a small snake wriggling off as quickly as possible in the direction of the other girls, who, on seeing it, ran away screaming. From what little I could distinguish of its form and colour, it seemed to answer the description I had heard of the cerastes, or horned viper, which is about a foot and a half long, rather thick for its length, and of a dirty, dusty colour, mottled. The horns are nearly over the eyes, and about the eighth of an inch in length. This is considered one of the most venomous of the snake tribe, and they are very numerous in this neighbourhood. I tried to kill it, but without success, as assisted

by the darkness it got away among the underwood and grass.

Madame de Goutin, the Consul's lady, received me with the utmost politeness; and after having given me my supper, she entertained me with a great deal of useful and interesting information, over a "shisha," or water-pipe. I told her of my escape from the viper, and how much I had been surprised to meet with one so soon after my landing, as I had heard in Egypt that but few were to be found in Abyssinia. She replied, that although scarcely ever seen in the highlands, yet in the low, hot districts, such as the neighbourhood of Moncullou, they exist in great numbers, much to the annoyance of the inhabitants; that Monsieur de Goutin had been bitten by one of the same species; and that, although recourse was immediately had to the proper remedies, the venom had for some time a severe effect on his general health. It would be highly dangerous to neglect a bite of this or any other venomous snake. Madame de Goutin told me that in cases where the persons bitten do not take precautions in time, hæmorrhage ensues on the second day, and the blood flows freely from the nose, eyes, mouth, and every pore of the skin: it may easily be imagined that, when in such a state, an extraordinary doctor and still more extraordinary remedies must be required to effect a cure. She also informed me that the game of the country is very abundant, and of great variety, from the elephant to the small and beautiful gazelle, called here the "Beni Israël." Elephants and lions generally con-

fine themselves to the less inhabited countries about Ailat, and the back woods at a distance from the populous districts. They, however, occasionally venture down even as far as Moncullou. A short time since an elephant, on meeting two "shangallas," or negro slaves, belonging to an inhabitant of this village, whose occupations had led them a little farther into the woods than usual, took one of them up with his trunk, threw him into the air, and, on his falling to the ground, gored him with his tusks and trampled on him till the poor wretch was reduced to an undistinguishable mass. His companion made the best of his way home, and arriving breathless, from fear and running, told the sad fate of his fellow-slave, and conducted several persons to the spot, where they found the body in the state described. The elephant, however, was gone, and no one gave himself the trouble to pursue him very far in the jungle.

On another occasion two worthy merchants were returning in the evening to Moncullou, after having finished the affairs of the day at Massàwa, and, only one of them being possessed of a mule, he accommodated his friend with a seat on the crupper. They were ambling along at a comfortable pace, no doubt discussing the past day's market, when, on suddenly turning a corner, formed by some bushes growing near the roadside, they beheld, to their great dismay, an enormous lion seated in the middle of the road, and quietly looking at them. As Balaam's ass of old saved his master's life by standing still, so did the mule in question, by running away, at a pace which, considering the

double load he carried, would have been astonishing under any other circumstances. The lion, however, apparently paid little or no attention to their movements. As soon as the mule's senses and those of his master were a little restored to their wonted equanimity they returned by the same road, and, on reconnoitring, found that the lion had taken himself off, leaving the passage free; so they proceeded on their way, congratulating themselves on their lucky escape, when behold, half a mile further on, there was the lion again seated in the road, waiting for them. "Hold fast!" says he of the saddle to him of the crupper; and away they go at a tangent, as before. Returning a second time, they found the road clear, and proceeded homewards. As, however, it was getting dark, they began to feel rather alarmed. Fortunately, however, they did not see the lion again till they were nearly at home, when, perceiving him at a short distance from the road, they dodged him, and, by taking a circuitous route, succeeded in getting safe into their houses.

The lion sometimes ventures even into the villages. One night Monsieur de Goutin's family were awakened by a tremendous yelling and laughing of hyænas outside their gate. The neighbours calling out to him to shoot, Monsieur de Goutin fired from within, and afterwards went out to see the effect of his shot, but was by no means agreeably surprised on finding that a lion, who assisted at the *conversazione*, was the cause of all the hubbub, the hyænas making continued but ineffectual hostile demonstrations against his royal person. The

Consul, finding a guest more than he had bargained for, retired quietly by the way he came, leaving the lion, who was too much occupied with his four-footed enemies to think of anything else.

With anecdotes such as these did my kind hostess beguile away the evening, and it was not till midnight that I was able to retire to my couch, which I begged to have prepared for me outside with my people, instead of in-doors, as I was to rise early, in order to get as much as possible of my journey done before the heat of the day set in. So, without taking off my clothes, I lay down till three o'clock, when I was disturbed by the men preparing to start, and in a quarter of an hour afterwards we were on the road.

CHAPTER VI.

Appearance of the country — Sensations in a tropical climate — Adventure with a viper — Ailat — Game — Boar-stalking — Hot springs — Natural warm bath.

THE country through which we passed during the early part of the day is rough, wild, and, in some parts, rocky and mountainous. Large trees are rarely met with; nothing in fact but shrubs and some of the different species of the mimosa tribe, the tallest of which seldom exceed twenty feet. To the sportsman I could say more in favour of the country. Before nine o'clock we had shot several guinea-fowl and some large birds of the partridge or grouse kind, and had seen several gazelle, but these were too wild to allow us to get within shot of them. There are also numbers of jackals, which might afford sport to the fox-hunter, were not the country too difficult to ride over. During the morning we killed two snakes. One of them was a viper, of a dirty, brownish colour, about a foot and a half long, very thick, with a short tail, and its head flattened, as if some one had accidentally put his foot on it. The other was as beautiful as the former was ugly. It was about fifteen feet long, and very thin, with a long tail tapering to a point. Its colour was a bright golden yellow, with a dark green back. The viper wriggled his dusty body along the ground, with a horizontal movement; whereas the other,

as if afraid of soiling his bright green and gold uniform, moved in graceful, spiral undulations.

Towards nine o'clock we descended into a thickly wooded valley, bordered on each side by rocky hills. Our road for some distance lay along the bed of a former torrent, of which, as the dry season was now long set in, there remained but a small rippling stream, which, here trickling on a little, there losing itself entirely in the sand, still contained sufficient water to attract to its edge several sorts of wild ducks and geese,—some of beautiful plumage. These, although one might have supposed them little accustomed to man and his tyranny, were wise enough to keep at a respectful distance, flying up the stream as we approached them, and then settling again. The jungle was filled with birds, whose notes, varying in tone from the harsh scream of the blue jay to the soft bell-like note of the "gouramaily," were the only sounds heard in the vast solitude. No description can possibly convey an idea of the sensations of one who for the first time feels himself really in a tropical country, with a tropical vegetation;—the burning sun, the orange sand, the bright rich green of the foliage, bordered by a sky of the deepest blue without a cloud;—everything so different from our own chilly clime, where all nature appears like a modest virgin, shrouded by a blue heavy haze as by a veil, which dims and obscures her many beauties, and, when, as an extraordinary event, the sun shines free from mists and clouds, appears to detract from his glory, and to give a cold bluish tint to every object illumined by his rays. Here, on the con-

trary, as if in pride of her own loveliness, Nature has cast off the veil, and left all her glories discovered to the wondering eyes of her true admirers, who, while their weak organs of vision allow them, gaze enraptured till they can gaze no more; and then, covering their eyes with their hands, anathematize the glare and heat, and make for the nearest shelter. This was the case with us, and we were very glad to be told by the guide that there was a spot close by, convenient for its shade and the vicinity of a spring, where we might take our breakfast, and rest during the heat of the day. So we alighted, collected fuel, which was plentiful in the jungle, kindled a fire, and prepared to cook the game we had shot in the morning. But as smoke and fire are not conducive to comfort in this climate, I retired to a short distance and spread my carpet in a natural bower formed by the overspreading boughs of a species of mimosa, from whose yellow flowers, which emit a delicious fragrance, the Egyptians distil a perfume which they call "fitneh." Here I lay and smoked, to deaden in some degree the keen edge of my appetite; but smoke being too light a sustenance to satisfy a hungry man, I made frequent inquiries as to the state of the kitchen. On one occasion, not distinctly hearing the servant's answer, I rose to a sitting posture and repeated my question, which being satisfactorily replied to, I was about to resume my former recumbent position, when, luckily turning my eyes in the direction of my legs, I saw one of my old friends, a horned viper, crossing my carpet, on his way to the long

grass and bushes on the other side. I stopped his progress with the butt of my gun; and his skin, which I preserved, paid the penalty of his impudence.

It will probably be remarked hereafter that adventures with snakes are only mentioned in this early part of my journey. It must not, however, be supposed that they were of less frequent occurrence during the remainder of my stay in these countries. The fact is, that, like most Europeans, I held them in great dread till I got accustomed to them; but such things by constant habit become so commonplace as scarcely to be noticed even at the moment; and after a time one thinks as little of a snake as one does in England of a rat.

Our game proved excellent, and we remained quiet to digest it till between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. We then remounted, and continued our journey without any adventure till nightfall, when we arrived at our destination. Our approach was greeted by thousands of jackals and hyænas, which howled and screamed at us from every direction, like so many fiends, angry at being disturbed in their nocturnal orgies.

The village of Ailat, which is composed of many scattered huts built of a framework of wood filled in with branches of trees, straw, &c., and thatched, is situated on the edge of a large sandy plain, covered with bushes, and surrounded by hills of no great size. No country in the world could be better adapted for covering game, and none could be better stocked than it is. One cannot go a hundred yards from the houses without seeing something. In the morning one is awakened by the distant

cry of the guinea-fowl as it leaves its perch on the trees. Grouse, partridges, wild boar, gazelle, and antelopes of every size and description, abound in the immediate neighbourhood; while elephants, rhinoceros, ostriches, and sometimes giraffe, are in the proper season found a little further off, and beasts of prey are everywhere to be met with. The hot spring, which is situated at some distance from the village, is considered to be a favourite haunt of the lion. On the road close by a man had been killed by one just before our arrival. Of the antelopes, the agazin and arab are especially to be noticed, on account of their size. The former is dun-coloured, with narrow white pencilled stripes down his sides, has spiral horns, and is nearly the height of a cow. The other is almost of the same size and of a yellowish red colour. The wild boars are very large, and have remarkably fine tusks,—a pair of formidable ones from the upper jaw, and a smaller pair from the lower. They do not project forward, like a European boar's, but grow laterally, turning over the snout, till in some cases they almost meet. The under tusks are three-cornered, sharp-edged like a knife, and adapted so as almost to fit into the sides of the upper ones.

One evening I went out to discharge my rifle (which had been loaded for some time), merely intending to clean it for a day's shooting on the morrow, and so took with me no ammunition. I was leisurely strolling along, thinking of anything but the chase, when looking up I observed at a considerable distance from me three pigs feeding. By carefully stalking I managed to get

within about a hundred and seventy yards of them, but not nearer; and even then I disturbed them, for they were just about to make off when I fired and hit one. He dropped blood for ten or fifteen yards, but could only have been barked, as beyond that distance the traces of blood, before very slight, were altogether lost. I returned home as quickly as possible, and, having procured a supply of ammunition, set out in pursuit of them, following in their track for more than an hour. But it was all to no purpose; and I was returning in despair, when on the road, within a hundred yards of me, I perceived a male and female quietly grazing behind some bushes. I crept up and let fly at the boar, and, the ball crossing him from side to side, he fell at once; but, though the wound must have been very near the heart, he did not die immediately, but kept turning round and round on his hinders as a pivot, and screaming piteously for some seconds; after which "he went the whole hog." His female companion, loving and courageous, remained near him as long as she possibly could with prudence; but by the time I had reloaded she was scampering off some two or three hundred yards in perspective. Unwilling to separate so loving a couple, I pursued her for some distance; but losing her in the jungle, I returned once more to my "pretty pork." But how to get him home was the difficulty. The distance was about an hour's walk, and I had no one with me but a little Bedouin boy, about nine or ten years old. To carry him being impracticable, I sent the lad home for aid, while I kept guard on the carcase. In due time he

returned, bringing with him an ass, on which, with much difficulty, we placed the body; but the enormous weight of the head, preponderating greatly over the hind quarters, obliged me to hold it up while the boy drove. Then the ass would not go straight, and whenever he lurched over towards me the elasticity of the pig caused it to slip to the other side. To remedy this, I desired the boy to hang on by the tail to steady it. Now the ass turned obstinate and refused to advance, and, after sundry kicks administered by both of us in vain, I (letting go the pig) gave him a lash behind, upon which he let fly at me with his heels. Down went the pig, and we had all our work to begin over again. Fortunately at this time some Bedouins passing on the road came up to us, and I begged their assistance, which, after a good deal of talk about *pork*, they consented to give me. They took the tail, leaving me the head and shoulders, more than half the weight of the whole animal. I, however, had the advantage over them in height and strength, and occasionally contrived, by closing up to the ass and giving my end a lift, to send all the weight over to their side. Thus, squabbling and tugging, we went on till we arrived at the house. On the following day we skinned the pig, and threw the carcase outside, hoping that a hyæna might be attracted to it during the night. Nothing however came, except a few jackals, one of which I shot.

Soon after this adventure I one morning set out alone (my servant being occupied in stuffing some specimens which I had shot the previous evening) on an excursion

in search of the hot-water springs of which I had heard so much. A little pathway having been pointed out to me as leading thither, I followed it till it divided into several smaller paths, one of which I took; but, finding that it did not lead me right, I struck across among the bushes and arrived at the spot where report had led me to imagine the spring would lie. I here found a little trickling stream winding its way down the valley. I several times walked up and down its course, and discovered that, as above it issued from the sand, so a short distance below it was again lost in it. At last I met with two Abyssinians; but they, being as ignorant of Arabic as I was of their language, misunderstood my questions, and pointed in the direction of the village. Thinking it possible that I might have passed the stream, I followed their indication, and so, wandering back again for several hours, I was attracted by the firing of guns, and arrived at the village nearly dead from thirst and vexation. I soon found my servant in a state of great anxiety on my account. He had been on a long but fruitless search after me, and had nearly given me up for lost. Having narrated my misadventures and described to him the position of the stream, he told me that had I only followed the valley a few hundred yards farther up I should have come to the original source and bathing-place. I, however, determined not to venture again alone, but to accompany the party of bathers which starts from the village every morning before sunrise. Accordingly the next morning we set out, and in due time arrived at the spot, which is situ-

ated in a narrow valley between two mountains. The site is picturesque, but the baths are rather too open to public view, and the bathers are not over-delicate in their ideas. Both sexes bathe almost in the same place, the men lying on their backs in about nine inches water, and the women sitting in a hole about ten yards below them. Most of the women and all the men were quite naked; so it may be imagined that this style of bathing would not altogether suit the ideas of the frequenters of Bath or Cheltenham, though in these latitudes such little naturalities are not objected to. While the rest of the party were thus engaged, not being anxious to join them, I walked up the valley, and had a good deal of sport among the fowl and other game that were sneaking down to the water to drink. In this way I amused myself for nearly two hours; and when I returned, I found, as I expected, that not only were all the people gone, but that the water had had time to repose: so I bathed comfortably. It was however so hot that, notwithstanding the great heat of the atmosphere and the warmth of my own body from walking, I found it difficult at first to bear my foot in it. I tasted the water, and, as far as I could guess, should think it contains both sulphur and iron. It is reckoned here a general specific for all complaints, but more especially for cutaneous diseases, many cases of which are in constant attendance. People come from the most distant parts of Abyssinia, from the islands about the Red Sea, even from Jedda and other towns on the Arabian coast, to try its efficacy, and generally, from what I hear, return well satisfied.

CHAPTER VII.

Inhabitants of Ailat — Bread-making — The guest's chamber, and its occupants — Bedouin merchants — A persevering marauder — Gregarious habits of the people — Moslem peculiarities of feeding — A Moslem "wake" — Mode of burial — African resurrectionists.

THE inhabitants of Ailat are Bedouins of the Bellaw tribe, which occupies all the tract of country lying about Arkeeko, and thence to the neighbourhood of Ailat. Those of the latter district are by caste mostly soldiers, if they may be so designated. They are easily distinguished from their more peaceful brethren, the herdsmen, by their wearing their hair close shaved, while the herdsmen arrange their bushy wigs in tufts or tresses on the head. Their manners are most purely pastoral. In the morning they eat a little bread and milk, and the same simple meal repeated in the evening, and seasoned with contentment and a good appetite, completes their daily nourishment. Their bread is made by the women in the following manner:—The corn is ground to flour between two stones,—a large one, rather hollowed on the surface, laid on the floor, and a smaller round pebble, by the aid of which, worked by the hand, the corn is rubbed down. It is sometimes passed through a sieve, and the coarser part rubbed down again. The sifting and second grinding are, how-

ever, seldom practised. The coarse flour thus obtained is made into a stiff paste, and then formed into small balls, which, flattened between the palms of the hands, are stuck round an earthen jar (heated by being filled with live charcoal), and left there till baked, which is quickly accomplished, as the jar soon becomes nearly red hot.

During our sojourn at Ailat we were lodged at the house of a sort of chief of the village, named "Fakak." Here, as in Arab countries, most strangers on their arrival at a camp or town inquire for the principal man's residence, where there is usually a hut or shed set apart for their reception. In this guest's apartment we were lodged with several other persons, one of them a negro, whose bed was placed beside mine. He was an elderly man, and had come from Dhalak (recommended, no doubt, by the Faculty) to try the effect of the bathing for an old chronic disease of the skin, called here "Hickuk" —by the English doctors "scabies," and more commonly known in England by the euphonious *sobriquet* of *Scotch fiddle*. At night he used to favour us with stories, and would sometimes improvise a sort of whining chant with his *fiddling accompaniment*. He remained with us nearly the whole time we were at Ailat; and besides him we had other companions, whose visits were of shorter duration, or who remained the night *en passant*.

It is a pretty sight to see these Bedouins or the Shohos encamp after a march. Many parties of them arrive here, composed principally of petty merchants, passing with their goods to and from Massàwa. As

they only remain during the night, they usually take up their post in the compound before the hut, and, having relieved their animals of their burdens, place the baggage together in a heap, and, sitting round it, light a fire, and prepare their provision for the evening. They sometimes make their bread themselves, but frequently the women of the house are good enough to do it for them, while the neighbours usually contribute a little milk towards their supper. Their merchandise is commonly carried on oxen or asses. The former, though rather small, are of a pretty breed, being very fine about the head and legs, with a large fold of loose skin hanging from the neck; some have also a small hump: they are capable of carrying a considerable load of baggage, and thus render themselves useful and profitable to their owners at all seasons of the year, either at the plough or as beasts of burden. Once, on the arrival of a party from Abyssinia, we were much amused at the courage and perseverance with which a little bird (very common in these countries) persisted in annoying the animals of the caravan, consisting of a considerable number of mules, asses, and oxen. The poor beasts, fatigued by a long day's march, were settling down comfortably to their food, when a little greyish brown bird, with a blood-red beak, perched on the back of one of the oxen, and, as the by-standers assured me, began to devour it. The ox, apparently alarmed as well as irritated by this new style of goading, made a rush, kicking and lashing with his tail, and plunging about in every direction as if mad; but nothing could shake the tenacity of the little bird,

who held on with his claws like grim Death, pecking away as unconcernedly as possible, till, joining in the fray, we literally knocked him off with sticks and stones, for no intimidation would induce him to quit his post; and no sooner was he down than up again he flew on the back of the nearest mule, which he commenced tormenting as he had done the ox. We again and again floored him from the back of this and several other animals which he mounted successively, till at last, worn out by blows, he fell to the ground unable to rise; but even in this extremity his courage never forsook him, for I received many desperate pecks before I succeeded in capturing him. His deeds will be handed down to posterity, and his skin will perhaps grace a museum in England. The people here imagine that he sucks the animals' blood, and the alarm exhibited by them on this occasion would appear to warrant the supposition, although in Abyssinia I have seen birds of the same description among the cattle, hopping on and off their backs in a quiet, business-like manner, the cows taking little or no notice of them, or permitting such liberties as philosophically as possible.

Among themselves the people of Ailat appear to be very sociably inclined. In the evening, parties of the men might be seen congregated about the doors of each other's houses to chat. Towards me they were particularly friendly, often rather too much so; for having no occupation themselves which requires solitude, they could not understand that any one else could have such, and imagined they were conferring a marked honour by re-

maining always about me, even when I was writing; and when I set out on a shooting excursion, I had always half a dozen or more fellows begging to be allowed to accompany me. They chased the wounded game, and carried home the dead; though, as good Mohammedans, nothing would induce them to partake of the contents of the bag shot by a Christian, or even by one of their own religion, unless the animal's throat had been cut "in the name of God: God is most great." An Abyssinian Moslem, however, one of my attendants, found out a way of relieving his conscience and filling his belly at the same time; for before I started he would take the ramrod, and, putting it into one of the barrels I had just loaded, tap with it, pronounce the necessary words, and then be perfectly happy in eating whatever that charge might bring down. As in shooting one can scarcely ever be sure of being in time to cut the animal s throat, they consider it sufficient to *think* the words while in the act of pulling the trigger. The animal thus killed is eatable, while that simply killed or dying a natural death is considered "futtise" or carrion, and unlawful for food.

It happened one day during my stay at Ailat, that a man was taken suddenly ill, and died in the field while tending his flocks. He was carried home on a couch, and as soon as he arrived near the village, and the news of his death was spread in the place, his wife, rushing out to meet him, set up such a howling, at the same time tearing her hair, that it almost frightened me. Shortly, however, her female friends, one by one,

dropped in in chorus, and then it was a complete thing; a thousand strong-lunged jackals could not hold a candle to them. Our host the sheikh, to whom I believe the man was distantly related, came to me and borrowed three measures of flour, a candle, and two needles; the flour was to be converted into bread for the men who had carried the corpse, and the needles were to sew his winding-sheet. The custom here is, after having washed the body, to wrap it in a sheet; it is then laid on a couch till the grave-diggers have completed their work, during which time the women remain in-doors howling to a drum accompaniment, while the men are squatted without. In about an hour the corpse is carried off at a trot to the cemetery, usually at some distance from the village; it is placed in the grave, which is generally very shallow, and a few stones are put down to mark the spot where it was laid, but not where it will lie in forty-eight hours after the funeral, for there is no tranquillity here for the dead. The African resurrectionists, the laughing hyænas, walk the body out of the tomb in no time. Those who can afford it pay a small sum to the priests to have a mass sung from the Koran every two or three months after the funeral.

CHAPTER VIII.

A summons to Kiaquor — Providing supper — Practice of true sportsmen — Shooting in England and in Abyssinia — The "Kantàfftafa" — A sportsman's difficulties — Boar-stalking — Rarity of unprovoked attacks on man by wild beasts — Man-eating tigers — Solitary elephants — Rencontres with wild boars.

I REMAINED some weeks longer at Ailat, shooting and collecting specimens of natural history, till a letter from Mr. Plowden (whom I imagined to be at Àdoua) reached me from Kiaquor, a village about three days' journey from Ailat, where, as he informed me, he lay in a state of great weakness from the effects of a severe fever, which both he and his companion, Mr. Bell, had contracted during their stay at Massàwa. They had started for the interior; but Plowden, being unable to continue the journey, remained at Kiaquor, while Bell went on to Àdoua to prepare a place for his reception. The fever, however, continued to attack him at intervals, and had reduced him to such a state of weakness that he had remained in this place for several weeks, unable to proceed, till accidentally hearing of my arrival he wrote to me, begging me to join him with all possible despatch. I accordingly determined to lose no time in my preparation for the journey to Kiaquor. In the evening before starting I went out to procure a supper

for myself and numerous friends and attendants; and to tantalize my English sporting readers, I will tell them what bag I brought home in little more than an hour. My first shot brought down four guinea-fowl; my second five ditto; third, a female of the little Ben Israel gazelle; fourth, her male companion; and fifth, a brace of grouse; so that in five shots I had as good a bag as in England one would get in an average day's shooting, and after expending half a pound of powder and a proportionate quantity of shot, caps, and wads. But I feel it my duty to explain that *I never shoot flying*, considering that unsportsmanlike. A true sportsman shows his skill by getting up to his game unperceived, when, putting the muzzle of his gun as close to the tail feathers as he possibly can, he blazes away into the thick of the covey, always choosing the direction in which he sees three or four heads picking in a row! At any rate this is the only way you can shoot in a country where if you entirely expend your powder and shot you must starve, or else make more, as I have been obliged to do many a time. I cannot understand how people in Europe can enjoy shooting, where one is dependent on a crowd of keepers, beaters, dogs, sandwiches, grog, &c. You wound a hare, and anxiously move forward to stop its getting away by another barrel, when your friend calls you to order—"For God's sake, my dear fellow, stand still and load, or you 'll spoil the dogs!" Hang the dogs, say I, if they are worth three penn'orth of cord. Then the vast excitement of walking up and down a turnip or cabbage garden, varied with a stubble field

or a potato-bed! You see nothing. Your dog smells something, and points it to you. You walk straight on in a line, and up get the birds within twenty yards of you. Bang, bang! Bagged a brace of tame partridges. Fine sport, verily! Or you find a hare sitting quietly at your feet; so you administer a kick on her posteriors, and then shoot her when she attempts to escape, thereby adding injury to insult. Although I may lay myself open to a vast deal of ridicule, yet I cannot help saying that it appears to me the height of folly and wanton cruelty to slaughter some fifty brace of inoffensive animals for the mere sake of boasting of it as a feat. No sport would ever induce me to kill more than was required for the kitchen. In Abyssinia the shooting is attended with much excitement, from the variety of game and the difficulty you have in pursuing it. My sole companion on ordinary occasions is a little boy, who carries my rifle, while I carry my gun, and we do all the work ourselves. His sharp eyes, better accustomed to the glare than my own, serve me in every point as well as a setter's nose. The country is, as I before said, sandy and covered with large bushes. In some places these are scattered, while in others they grow so thick as to form an almost impassable jungle. Most of the trees are thorny, being chiefly of the mimosa tribe, and their thorns are of a very formidable description, some of them being about two inches and a half in length, and as thick at the base as a large nail; while another variety, called in Abyssinia the "kantàff-tafa," have their short curved thorns placed on the

shoots two and two together. These catch you like the claws of a hawk, and if they enter your clothes you had better cut off the sprig at once, and carry it with you till you have leisure to liberate yourself, otherwise you will never succeed; for as fast as you loosen one thorn another catches hold. Through such obstacles as these you have to fight your way, and if the day be unlucky you will perhaps start your game close under your feet, at a moment when you could not level your gun if your life depended on it. But suppose you have better luck, and have seen your chase (a boar for example) at some distance from you, then you have the real enjoyment of stalking him, and you must do it well, for no animal is more wary than the wild pig. He is probably feeding near the middle of some open space among the trees, whence, from the bushes being scattered, he is able to discover any approaching object. He seldom trusts himself too near a cover; and I have observed that when stationary these animals usually feed with their tails to windward. Instinct would appear to teach them to trust to their sight for the one direction, and to the wind's bringing them sound or scent of an aggressor from the other. Be this as it may, the right side for the sportsman is of course the wrong way of the wind; and then he has only to guard against being seen or heard. You must now watch your opportunity, and profit by every momentary turn of his head to spring or crawl on your belly from one cover to another, and in so doing you will employ perhaps a good half-hour before you reach safe shooting

distance. But you will scarcely imagine a third of that time to be passed, so great is the excitement produced by each of his motions. You will see him now and then grubbing in the ground, now taking a suspicious glance on either side, accompanied by a satisfied grunt as he returns to his meal. Again he starts at some little noise you have made (almost imperceptible to yourself) and runs a step or two, with his eyes fixed in your direction. If, however, you are cleverly covered, and the roots he has left are sweet, he will, ten to one, return. But, to cut the matter short, you have reached the nearest practicable cover, and are anxious to have a shot at him; yet, from holding your breath and running in the heat, with your head and tail on a level, quadruped fashion, you find yourself panting and all of a shake. It would not be prudent to throw away your lead and lose your pork; so take it coolly; rest a moment, draw a long breath, rub the palms of your hands on your breeches (if you wear any) and then on the sand to dry them. Having done this, take a cool aim (resting your rifle if your hand be still shaky), pull steadily—beware of a jerk. Bang! "Wee, wee, wee!" He has it! "How so?" you exclaim; "he is off." Never you mind: hold your tongue and load again. He makes a furious gallop in a circle, and, returning to the place where you shot him, drops down dead. So at least it occasionally happened to me. In one instance the pig would not wait my convenience, and I had to take a running shot at his hinders as he made off. Certain inequalities in the ground caused him to take an

oblique direction, when, aiming at his side, my ball hit him on the ham, passed under the skin only, and entering between the ribs traversed the body to the opposite shoulder. After making the gyrations I have described he fell dead at my feet.

These animals, unprovoked, never attack man; nor do I believe in the general opinion that certain other wild beasts will do so. I have never yet seen such a case myself, and have had many conversations with good authorities on the subject, all of whom appeared to agree with me. Among others, I had, at Cairo, the pleasure of forming the acquaintance of Colonel Outram, an officer equally distinguished in India for his skill as a sportsman, as for his courage in the field and judgment in diplomacy. On inquiring of him, he agreed with me in every point, and told me that even the so much to be dreaded "man-eating tigers" never attack a man to his face, but usually spring at him from an ambush. The only animal spoken of by the natives of this country as having the daring to do so is the rhinoceros; but as I have never had an intimate acquaintance with him, I cannot pretend to pronounce as to his character. A single male elephant will attack anything; but this can no more be taken into consideration than the acts of a dog when under the influence of hydrophobia; for the elephant, thus separated from the herd, appears to be nearly in a state of madness, wantonly destroying every object he can lay trunk upon. If wounded, or otherwise provoked or frightened, the wild boar, like all other animals, turns in self-defence

on his aggressor; and a most formidable brute he is, too, when he takes it into his head to charge. More than once I have been the object of such an attack; but on looking round with a view to escape, it has generally happened, very luckily for me, that the nature of the ground rendered it more prudent for me to stand where I was and defend myself. On one occasion, a wounded boar came at me in a low bush whence I had shot him; so I dodged to the other side as he passed, and he went straight on, apparently rather pleased than otherwise to avoid the rencontre. Another time, I had killed the male, and the female which was with him (I pretend not to say by what feelings instigated, not knowing whether she was his wife or sister) charged most valiantly to the rescue. I prepared to defend myself as well as I could with the butt of my rifle, which I clubbed with both hands; but the brute appeared unwilling to spoil so good a tool, for coming within three yards of me she dashed her snout into the sand, thereby dusting me well all over, and went to the right about as fast as she came. I pursued her from sheer spite for the start she had given me, and, coming up, shot her as I had previously done her companion. If you take to your heels there is little chance: they soon come up with you, and send a few inches of their tusks into a part where few men would think proper to show the scar. They are, moreover, the toughest animals I ever met with, except, perhaps, the large dog-faced baboon. An old sow once amazed me by her fortitude. I had aimed at her heart, as being the most susceptible part of the *beau sexe*; but,

either from my hand being unsteady, or the rifle overcharged, I hit her back-bone, which I imagine must have been nearly severed, for she fell, the blood pouring over her sides and rump from the wound. On my going up to her she rose and crawled off on her fore-legs, dragging her hinders after her. Anxious to put her out of pain, I made at her with my bowie-knife; but she was ungrateful enough to refuse my well-intentioned advances, each time I approached her letting drive at me with her infernally sharp tusks, one of which grazed my leg so as to draw blood, besides making a mark on the butt of my rifle, which I had put forward to guard off the blow. With a spear I could have finished her at once; but economical considerations with regard to my powder induced me to refrain from giving her another shot, so certain was I that she must drop in a moment: but she didn't; for she got away among the bushes, and it being nearly night I lost her. Next day, attracted to the spot by the vultures congregated there, we found these birds pecking at the few bones which the hyænas had left.

CHAPTER IX.

Ailat to Kiaquor — Guinea-fowl — Difficulties of the road — Travelling barefoot — Desert punch — Recipe for picnic bread — A traveller's dinner — Advice as to eating and drinking — The pipe an essential in the East—An ignorant guide—"Shoho" villages—Language of various tribes — Habits of the Shohos — Their hospitality — Their costume contrasted with that of the Abyssinians — Arrival at Kiaquor.

IN the last Chapter I prepared my readers for a journey to Kiaquor, to see my poor sick friend Plowden, and thence perhaps to Àdoua, the capital of Tigrè. Having little preparation to make, we were afoot the next morning long before the sun was up, and when he arose we were some way advanced on our road, with our backs turned to him. I say we had little preparation to make. Our party consisted of four persons—myself, a countryman as guide, a negro servant of Bell's, called Abdallah, from Sennaar, and an Abyssinian lad who had lately entered my service. The whole of our baggage at starting was a small bag of flour, sufficient for three days' provision, half a pint of honey in a drinking horn, a change of raiment, and my ammunition and arms. Each of us carried his share. The plain which we had to cross before arriving at the hills literally teemed with guinea-fowl, which at that early hour appeared unwilling to quit their roosting-places on the trees; and when, as we approached them, they did condescend to

budge, they collected on the ground in coveys of some hundreds each. In not dreading molestation they judged rightly; for anticipating a continuance of game, we preferred trusting to the chance of killing sufficient for our wants nearer our dining-place, to the inconvenience of carrying them all the morning in the sun. Further on, before ascending the first hill, I passed almost close to seven pigs, which also appeared conscious that they were in no danger, as they remained quietly feeding within easy shooting distance. The road, as we advanced, became more and more rough and difficult, till at last we found ourselves ascending and descending almost perpendicular hills, covered with large, round, loose pebbles, and well garnished with the usual proportion of thorny trees, neither of which, as may be imagined, contributed to the comfort of a barefooted pedestrian in one of the hottest climates in the world. I had up to this time so far retained old habits as to wear sandals; but even sandals proved inconvenient on exchanging the sandy plain for the stony hills; for, far from protecting my feet, they were the cause of my getting several ugly knocks, by tripping me up and making me slip: so, following the advice and example of my companions, I took them off and carried them in my hands. Before my feet got well hardened I suffered considerably, though not so much as I expected, for the use of sandals is a good preparation for going barefoot, as a great deal of sand gets between them and the foot. I had also been accustomed to go barefoot in moist and deep sandy places, as well as in the house; and was, therefore, not

altogether so new at it as if I had constantly worn shoes and stockings.

We proceeded in this way for nearly two hours, when we arrived at the top of the hill. The country, it must be admitted, had its redeeming qualities; for the scenery, though rough and wild in the extreme, was not devoid of interest. Here the guide gave us the welcome news that water (the first we had met with that was drinkable since our departure from Ailat) was to be found in the valley below us. In order to avoid arriving at the water heated and thirsty, we proposed a halt for a few minutes. My boy, wishing to have especial care of the honey, had taken it from the guide, and was carrying it in its leathern case by a strap round his neck; but now, tired and hot, he threw himself down and spilled it on the ground; forgetting that a wide-mouthed drinking-horn will not carry a fluid, like clear honey on a hot day, unless it is kept in a vertical position. Without stopping to speak, we all rushed forward, knocking our heads together from eagerness, and sucked up the little honey that the greedy sand had left on its surface. "What can't be cured must be endured:" so we made a laughing matter of it, though it was exceedingly vexatious thus to lose our only little luxury, and be reduced to a flour and water diet.

Without more talk we set off at once for the water, which we reached in about a quarter of an hour, and were agreeably surprised on finding a magnificent stream dashing down between two cliffs, which, overhanging it

at a few yards only one from the other, shaded its course as it fell from rock to rock in cascades, each of which had, by centuries of perseverance, hollowed out of the hard stone a basin for its waters to repose in. Some of these cavities were very large, and of considerable depth; and some had pretty water-plants growing from their edges, and now in full flower. Could any thing be more refreshing than such a sight to a hot and wearied traveller? After resting a short time I bathed in one of these basins; and then, washing out the honey-horn with about a quart of water, and adding thereto a tablespoonful of rum, I presented my companions with a convivial bowl of punch. They all pronounced it an excellent compound, and I willingly joined in the notion; for though it was nearly pure water, imaginary enjoyment is a very agreeable thing in the absence of the reality; and perhaps my companions were anxious to make the best of it, in order that I might forget the mishap with the honey.

Thus refreshed, we continued our march through the same style of country as before. Antelopes, gazelles, baboons, monkeys, and wild boars passed close to us; but, fatigued as we all were, I let them go, rather than add unnecessarily to the people's load. I always hoped we should again meet with some fowl; but at half-past one o'clock, the time of our arrival at the place where we were to halt and dine, we had found none, and we then regretted the gazelle. On being informed that we had arrived at our halting-place, I made the inquiry most natural to a thirsty man—Where is the water?

To which our guide replied by scraping a hole with his hands in the sand, which soon became half full of a dingy, suspicious-looking aqueous matter, which, however, he assured me would (like many young men in Europe) become more respectable when settled. The first thing to be done was to prepare the bread, for we were all hungry: and now, while I describe the way in which it was made, my readers should lend their attention, and, if found agreeable, make note of it; for it may happen that at a picnic some fair lady may have a longing for fresh bread, and if you are gallant you may, by this recipe, present it to her in a very short time, hot and smoking from the fire. First, you must of course have flour, of which you take a sufficient quantity: this you mix with water to make a stiff dough, which you knead up well with your hands into balls, each the size and form of a nine-pound shot. Then take a round pebble, heated previously in the fire, and making a hole in your loaf, poke it in and close the mouth: then, putting the loaf on the embers, you must be careful to turn it about, so that it may not be done more on one side than the other. In about ten minutes it will be baked and ready for eating: so that you will, if hungry and clever, have made, baked, and eaten your bread in not much more than a quarter of an hour, which all will allow to be sufficiently quick. The only fault to find with bread thus made is, that seldom more than the outside and inside surfaces are at all baked.

Having thus dined, with no sauce but a good appetite, we reposed for an hour or so till the great heat had

abated. Some people may think that bread and water is a hard diet on a journey, but they are much mistaken. A man who knows how to appreciate bread and water may with that simple diet go more comfortably through a hard day's march in a hot climate than if attended by the best cook in England with all his *batterie de cuisine*; and for this plain reason, that though the culinary art may procure him some enjoyment at the half-way halt, yet he will find that such temporary pleasure must be severely paid for in the afternoon's walk; meats and all other strong food being of too heating a nature. But, if hungry, don't eat your bread greedily, and then wash it down with buckets of water to prevent choking; sop your bread in the water, and then eat it; you will thus at once appease your hunger and quench your thirst, without being in danger of strangulation, or of having to carry a few extra pounds weight of water rattling about in your stomach for the remainder of the day; above all things, make it an invariable rule *always to drink as little water as possible*, remembering that the more you drink the more you will thirst. Another thing almost essential to the comfort of one who has been long in the East is a pipe. Author of 'Wanderings in South America,' well hast thou written; but on this point thou hast most unquestionably failed: a traveller's pipe is his substitute for food and medicine, the sole companion that can render him calm and patient under suffering, a great preventive against all sorts of infection, and highly useful where malaria is to be feared. In this opinion I am supported by a medical work sent out to

me after the above remarks in favour of a pipe were written. It says, "a pipe or cigar will be of infinite service." If I rightly remember, Mr. Waterton's objection is, that "smoking is a foul habit, making a foul place, and a foul mouth to the smoker." I am not sure of having used the very expressions of the writer, as it is now many years since I read his book; but such is the sense: as for the room, it would of course be a horrible thing to smoke in a lady's boudoir, unless she particularly desired it. "All's fair in the open air" was an old saying at school, and in this case at least it is true. Smoking in the open air, or in a room reserved for the purpose, can scarcely be objectionable; not that I would advocate smoking in England, where prejudice is so much against its practice, except under certain restrictions, such as keeping a dress expressly for the occasion, and washing the mouth afterwards.*

"Sicuramente un giovine educato
Io non dirò che debba presentarsi
Ad una dama dopo aver fumato
Senza prima la bocca risciaquarsi;
Ma diavol, costa cosi poco l' acqua!
E chi è quel porco chi non si risciacqua?"

But to conclude what my readers will perhaps consider is "all smoke," I have gone a whole day under hard fatigue without eating, and yet have not felt hungry. Still I would by no means assert that the pipe satisfied my stomach; it only diverted my attention,

* Since writing the above I have found, on my return to England, that smoking is become much more prevalent than formerly; that it is, in fact, now almost a necessary part of a young gentleman's education.

and kept me in good humour; so while I smoked, my guide and servants fell asleep, and, on finishing my pipe, I joined them in their happy state of oblivion. Having slept nearly an hour, the guide awoke us, and we continued our journey. The road, instead of improving, appeared to grow worse as we advanced; there was, in fact, no regular road, and our guide did not appear over clever in his calling, for, after frequently climbing a mountain, we found, on a careful inspection of the country, that we had taken a wrong direction, and were obliged to return by the way we had come, and seek another. This was not a little perplexing and vexatious, and my companions expressed loudly their discontent at the guide's want of ability; and words increasing, I was obliged to interpose my authority to prevent a serious quarrel, especially as we were altogether at the "Shoho's" mercy, who was in the country of his own people, while we were all strangers; and he might at any time have taken us out of our road, and at night decamped, and left us to fish for ourselves. However, about an hour after sunset we had the pleasure of descending into a little plain among the hills, and of hearing voices of men and the lowing of cattle, and shortly after we arrived in sight of the village fires. It was a "Saho" or "Shoho" camp; for though these people build themselves huts instead of tents, they in other respects follow the customs of all nomadic tribes, only remaining in one spot as long as there is good pasture for their cattle, and, when this is eaten up, seeking another.

The villages are composed of huts, formed of straw

SHOHO CAMP.

and boughs of trees, neatly enough fashioned, and thatched; they are placed so as to form a circle, with one or two spaces left as entrances, in which the cattle are penned for the night, the entrances being closed by bushes strewed before them. The people are Mohammedans; their language is altogether different from that of any of their neighbours, resembling neither the Abyssinian, nor the language of Massàwa and the coast, nor yet the Arabic. In some respects it resembles the language of the Galla tribes, especially in the numerals, many of which are nearly the same. This is somewhat astonishing, as between the Gallas and the Shohos there lies a very large tract of country, among whose several dialects no trace of a link can be found. But as on these points of language I can by no means call myself an authority, never having made it an object of research, I cannot do better than refer such of my readers as may be desirous of further information on the subject to a work by my esteemed friend Monsieur Antoine d'Abbadie.

The Shohos, in common with all migratory tribes, are in their habits entirely pastoral, refusing to have any hand in the cultivation of the soil. Although hostile in religion to their Christian neighbours the Abyssinians, there exists between them a most perfect *entente cordiale*, which is highly advantageous to both parties; for the Abyssinians being entirely agricultural, the rich owners of oxen among them intrust these animals, after their services at the plough are no longer required, to the care of a Shoho, who pastures them for the re-

mainder of the year, receiving in payment a quantity of corn on their safe return. On the other hand, rich Shohos, owners of vast herds of cattle, lend out their oxen to poor Christians who cannot afford to purchase any for themselves. The Abyssinian, owner of the land, has the entire labour and management of the crop, while the Shoho, owner of the oxen, has a share of the harvest.

We were hospitably received by these people, who lent us skins for beds, and provided us with fire-wood, as we preferred the society of the cows outside to that of their masters' parasites within the huts. Shortly after, the cows being milked, we were supplied with a large bowl of milk for our supper, and, having made our homely repast, were soon all sound asleep. Next morning, having carefully wrapped up the skins on which we had slept, we started before either the sun or our good hosts had risen. The events of this day were in most respects similar to those of the day preceding, even to our being received in like manner at its close by the inhabitants of another Shoho village. Here, however, the milk, which was supplied to us in large quantities, was highly flavoured with something by no means agreeable, which had been added to prevent its turning sour. We here met Sheikh Suliman, chief of several of the surrounding tribes; he made himself very agreeable to us, but was only distinguishable from his subjects by his carrying a lance and mace, both of which, even to the handles, were entirely iron. On the following day, after crossing a vast plain similar to that of Ailat, and which

Shohos,

I was told abounds with elephants at certain seasons of the year, we arrived at about two o'clock in the afternoon at Kiaquor, which is the first village in this direction belonging to Oubi, nominally Viceroy, but in fact the absolute monarch of Tigrè.

We here leave the temporary hut of the migratory Shoho for the more solid but equally rude cabin of the Abyssinian, which is usually built with stones and mud, with a thatched roof, and sometimes plastered inside with mud. The difference of costume is also observable. The tressed hair of the Abyssinian Christian contrasts strangely with the bushy wig of the Shoho, who arranges his woolly hair into two large tufts, one of which is on the top of the head, and the other behind. By way of ornament a pin or scratcher is stuck through the front tuft. A dandy will perhaps wear one eighteen inches long. Many of these people, on getting a little up in the world, become exceedingly conceited about their personal beauty, if one may judge by their manners and appearance. It is amusing to see with what a careless air of self-satisfaction a young Shoho will draw out his long hair-pin, and, after having passed it two or three times through his hair, replace it in the fore bush immediately over his forehead, with as much of it protruding as he can possibly manage without its falling, at the same time smiling most contentedly at nothing at all, or giving vent to a shrill whistle, as if driving his cattle,—perhaps to let the world know that he is the owner of a good herd. The Abyssinians wear breeches and large belts, instead of which the Shohos sometimes sub-

stitute a kilt of cotton stuff, which falls a little below the knee, or content themselves with the "tobe" or cloth, alone, which in this case is made to answer the double purpose of coat and trousers. Being passed first round the body, so as to cover the lower extremities, the ends are crossed on the breast and thrown over the shoulders. For convenience it is occasionally tied at the back of the neck.

At Kiaquor I found Mr. Plowden much better, though still in a deplorable state of weakness, and thoroughly sick of a place where he had been detained for so long a period. Thinking that change of air might be beneficial to him, we determined, as soon as possible, to start for Àdoua.

CHAPTER X.

Start for Àdoua — Hamasayn — Richness of the soil — Curse of civil war — The priest Coumfou usurps the government of Hamasayn — Aito Habtai, his successor, is defeated by Garra Amlac, the legitimate heir, and the country given up to pillage — Garra Amlac rebels against the Viceroy Oubi, but is subdued by Shétou, Oubi's son.

AFTER one night's rest, we prepared for our departure. This journey promised to be more agreeable than the last,—with the serious drawback, however, of poor Plowden's ill health. I was lucky enough to find that he had an extra mule, so that I could spare my legs. We had a good many servants, about eight porters for luggage, and the little variety of provisions which the country could furnish: moreover, we were about to travel on a beaten track through a populous district, in the villages of which we could always renew our supplies, should they fail us. The greater part of our road lay through the fine province of Hamasayn, a vast table-land, varied with beautiful hill and valley scenery. The most careless observer, in passing through this country, cannot fail to mark the extreme richness of the soil, and the great capabilities of the land were it properly cultivated. To us it presented itself under the most disadvantageous circumstances. Civil war, the perpetual scourge of Abyssinia, and the principal cause of its remaining in its present state of poverty and bar-

barism, had passed over this fair land, and reduced it to such a state that wherever you turned you saw nothing but devastation and ruin. Whole villages had been burnt to the ground and their lands laid waste by Garra Amlac, son of Aito Sillou, and the Baharnegas Za Georgis. The cause was this:—The ancestors of Garra Amlac had been hereditary chiefs of this country till the reign of the late Viceroy, Ras Welda Selassy, when a priest named Coumfou, a man of low birth, but wealthy, succeeded by intrigue and bribery (giving large presents not only to the Ras, but also to the influential persons about his court) in persuading him, on some pretext, to turn out the rightful chief, and instal him in his place. Afterwards, during the reigns of Dejatch Gabra Michael (called Garr' Inchael), Sabagardis, and even under the present Viceroy, Oubi, he contrived to retain the position which he had usurped, by carefully providing soldiers whenever the Prince required them, and regularly paying the large sum of money demanded of him as tribute for his province. At the usurper's death, however, which occurred two or three years before our arrival, Garra Amlac opposed his being succeeded by his son Aito Habtai (who had put himself forward), and petitioned Oubi against such succession, pleading that it would be unjust to deprive him of a right which had descended to him by inheritance from the most ancient times, simply because Coumfou had been a rich man and a clever tax-collector. Oubi acceded to his claim, but shortly after, on his setting out for the war in the Amhàra country, Aito Habtai (as is usual in

such cases of the King's absence, when every man takes the opportunity of doing the best he can for himself, by fair means or foul, force being the only acknowledged power), as soon as his master's back was turned, refused to obey his decree, and persisted in holding the government of Hamasayn. Garra Amlac, having no one to appeal to, determined to obtain his right by force. Though rich and numerous, the men of Hamasayn have no reputation as warriors, and, in a battle between them and the men of Cologouzai (a neighbouring province), commanded by Garra Amlac, and the Baharnegas, they were defeated with a loss of four hundred and sixty-five men slain, while Cologouzai lost but two. This great disproportion may be easily accounted for. It is probable that in the actual battle the victors lost their two men, while the vanquished, having lost perhaps ten at the most, turned and fled, the remaining four hundred and fifty-five being slain defenceless in the pursuit. This victory placed Garra Amlac firmly in his government, and his first act was to give over the whole country to be pillaged by his victorious troops, as a punishment to the people for having taken the part of his rival. So the land was burnt and laid waste as we beheld it.

While on this subject, it may be interesting to my readers to hear the continuation of the history of these intestine broils, as illustrative of the character of the Abyssinians. Of Aito Habtai, the Pretender, they will hear no more, for I forget what became of him, but imagine he retired into private life.

Garra Amlac, elated with his victory, and his ambi-

tion being still unsatiated,—forgetting his allegiance to Oubi, and taking advantage of his absence from the country,—pillaged a territory near his government, called Tederer, and thus declared himself one of the many rebels who at that time disturbed the provinces of Tigrè. Meanwhile Oubi had, under the most disgraceful circumstances, suffered a defeat at Devra Tabor, his troops having in the first instance overcome those of the Ras Ali, who was compelled to seek safety in flight. A party of soldiers going to Oubi's tent to surrender as prisoners, found him and his personal followers in so complete a state of intoxication that they actually bound him and carried him off, and he was kept prisoner till the Ras, recovering from his fright, and returning after eight days' absence, found himself victor, instead of vanquished, as he had imagined; and Oubi would probably have remained in prison during the term of his natural life, had not the Copt Bishop (or Aboun) interceded in his behalf, and almost compelled Ali to set him free. On his return to Tigrè, Oubi found that his throne had been usurped by a chief named Araia, commonly called the Balgadda Araia, from his being the hereditary "shoum" of the province of Arho, whence the salt, used as money in Abyssinia, is procured, and which is consequently one of the most lucrative provinces in the country. This man, indeed, has perhaps more right to the throne of Tigrè than Oubi, the latter being a stranger, whose only right is might, while Araia is a Tigrèan, and descended from the family of Ras Welda Selassy. He, however, retreated before Oubi towards

Cheliquot, whither the latter pursued him, passing by way of Temben.

Arrived at Cheliquot, and hearing of Garra Amlac's conduct, Oubi immediately detached from the army Belladta Obsabius, Belladta Kòccovy, Bejerundy Càfty, Berry Bella Welda Gabriel (ox-eating son of St. Gabriel), and several chiefs of note, whom, with their forces, and those of his son Lemma, he sent, under the command of his second son (Shétou), to punish the revolted chief. Shortly after their departure, Oubi's Fittowràris, or generals of the advanced guard, namely, Garr Inchael, Ingeder Wark, and Welda Georgis, together with the Aggow Chieftain (Shoum Aggow) Weld' Inchael, started off to Enderta, whither the Balgadda had fled, and without their master's consent or order (for Oubi was lying sick with an ulcer or boil on his stomach) engaged, defeated, and put him to flight. Shoum Aggow Weld' Inchael, distinguishing the Balgadda, galloped after him, calling to him to surrender, and that he would spare his life; but Araia, turning in his saddle, fired twice at his pursuer with a double-barrelled gun (given him by a French traveller named Lefevre), and his second shot killing him, the Balgadda escaped. The Fittowràris returned in triumph; but Oubi, vexed at the death of his favourite Weld' Inchael, ordered Welda Georgis and Garr Inchael a hundred and fifty stripes each, with the giraffe—a long, heavy plough whip, used here for flogging criminals as well as oxen. Their allowance was so well administered that they with difficulty got over the effects of the

punishment. It was severe treatment, after the victory they had gained; but they deserved it for having presumed to engage in battle without their master's knowledge.

Meanwhile, Shétou had advanced as far as Belliss, whence he detached Càfty, who proceeded to Axum, and subdued the rebel Nebrìd Welda Selassy. On his return they determined to remain for some time at Belliss, which is a very fertile district, and *eat it up*. The people of Cologouzai, under Garra Amlac, not wishing their country to be subjected to a similar intrusion, resolved to act on the offensive, and attack Shétou in Belliss, rather than wait till he should come to them. They arrived at the Amhàra camp at night, and, assured of the victory, posted part of their troops so as to cut off from their enemies all chance of flight; and it was determined that every man of them should be put to death, the women and children only being spared to become slaves to their captors. An hour before sunrise the men of Cologouzai made an attack on their half-awakened foes, who, astonished at finding themselves thus unexpectedly surrounded, had nearly lost the day at the first onslaught, which was made with the greatest determination—they of Cologouzai rushing in like madmen, and filling the air with their shouts of "Isgyoh" (Oh God!), which is their usual cry on entering battle. Shétou, seeing his men so much taken aback, sprang on his horse and galloped about amongst them, striking some of the fugitives with the flat of his sword, upbraiding others, encouraging those who appeared most ready

to do their duty, and reminding all, that, surrounded as they were, those who fled were more sure of death than those who remained to fight; and "if we are to die," he added, "had it not better be on the field of battle, like men, than be butchered like sheep?" He at the same time turned and charged the enemy, accompanied by a few of the bravest of his followers. Such language and conduct from a youth of only eighteen brought his panic-stricken soldiers to their senses. They rallied, and, fighting desperately, maintained their ground. Bejerundy Càfty, who had the command of a wing of the army, from not having been attacked so soon as the others, had had more time for preparation. He had successfully engaged those of the enemy opposed to him, and, coming up to the rescue at this critical moment, entirely changed the fate of the day, and the people of Cologouzai were beaten with great slaughter. As a matter of course their country was given up to pillage; after which Shétou, collecting his troops, prepared to return by the way of Serawy and Quohain, where also were some rebels to be dealt with. The people of Quohain opposed his progress, and an engagement ensued, which, however, was a very unimportant one compared with that at Belliss; for the Quohain people, unlike the Cologouzai, have a poor notion of fighting. They began their attack from a distance; a shower of stones and clubs rattled harmlessly on the broad shields of the Amhàra warriors, who had squatted down to receive it. Then followed an equally inoffensive discharge of lances; and when the poor fools had thrown away

their weapons without killing a man, the soldiers jumped up and found them all unarmed, except with their small round shields, and a few with knives of about a foot long. These were of course soon dropped, and their owners, after very little resistance, were turned to the right about, scarcely a man being hurt of the victorious army. After this victory Shétou returned to his father.

CHAPTER XI.

Addy Killàwita — The quolquol — An escape — A useful moral — Wretched accommodation — Maiya — Shaha — Kouddofelassy — Great inhospitality — Beyt Mariam — A missionary — Addy Hai Hai — Curiosity of the people — A fracas — Abyssinian courage — The Mareb — A storm — Arrival at Àdoua.

WE will now resume our journey. Our first halt was at noon, when we rested for a short time under the shade of a large sycamore, near a ruined village; and, having refreshed our animals and reinvigorated ourselves with a little bread, honey, and Cayenne pepper, we proceeded for an hour, when the rain coming down heavily we were obliged to take refuge in a house at the village of Addy Killàwita, a small hamlet very prettily situated on rising ground, and surrounded by remarkably picturesque scenery. Here, for the first time, I observed the quolquol, a species of Euphorbia, which grows like a cactus, the leaves and branches being both of a fleshy substance, and containing a large quantity of milky sap, which flows out plentifully on a sprig being wounded or broken. This milk is poisonous, and is used by the natives for intoxicating the fish in the small rivulets, which being dammed above and below the holes where the fish are known to lie, a quantity of the quolquol juice is put into the water, and in a short time the fish are seen to float insensible on its surface. A drop of this

poison spirting by accident into a person's eye is said to be sufficient to render him blind. It has also a very adhesive, gummy property, on which account the people use it for glueing things together, and likewise for rendering waterproof a sort of basket made of grass very finely wrought, and in which, when quolquolized, they carry milk. The trees grow to a considerable height, and bear small blossoms, yellow or pink, according to the kind, which appear along the upper edge of the leaves.

Our road was in some places filled with an exceedingly beautiful insect, in form something like a caterpillar, but shorter and thicker, and covered with a fur-like velvet of the brightest scarlet.

Plowden being taken very ill here, we were obliged to remain quiet till he should feel strong enough to continue his journey; and so we set about to procure a lodging. This point being settled, I started in quest of a supper, and it was not long before I heard the pintado's call in a valley a few hundred paces from the village. I had with me my own boy and a servant of Plowden's, who, being considered an able sportsman, was intrusted with a gun. Before descending into the valley I had separated from him, desiring him to take a direction to the right of the spot where we judged the birds to be, while I went to the left. After proceeding about a hundred yards I stood and consulted with the boy, and was endeavouring to hear the call again, when we were startled by a report in the bushes a few paces to our right, and at the same moment a ball passed im-

mediately over the boy's head, and within an inch or two of my nose. Thinking there might be robbers in the bushes, I cocked my gun and entered them; but finding no one, I passed through to the other side, and there was the sportsman coolly reloading his gun! On inquiring why he had taken such a liberty with my nose, he replied that, finding his gun loaded with ball, he had discharged it in order to reload with shot for the fowl; and excused himself for firing in that direction by saying that he imagined we were much farther advanced on our way. As he was a well-disposed fellow, I felt convinced it was an accident; and having cautioned him to be more careful in future, we continued our different routes, and returned in the evening with a very good bag. I mention this little incident purely because it conveyed a good moral to me, and may do so to others. The lad who accompanied me, though strong and thick-set, was for his age (nearly 20) remarkably short, and his size was a continual subject of joke for his companions, and of annoyance, no doubt, to himself. Had my boy been taller, or my nose longer, either he would have been brained, or I should have been rendered even uglier than I am.

Our residence at the village was not of the best, especially for a sick man—a narrow, small hut, barely high enough for a tall person to stand upright in, with a door about five feet high, the only aperture by which light and air had any chance of entering. In this ill-ventilated apartment were packed the greater part o our company (about eleven men), two mules, and a

number of goats belonging to the landlord. The atmosphere was of course none of the purest; but we had no remedy; the rainy season had set in, and we could find no other shelter for our people and animals. So as soon as my companion had recovered a little from his fit of ague, we continued our journey as far as a village called Maiya, about six miles distant, in the hope of finding better accommodation. But it was a vain hope! At first we found none at all; and it was not till after a vast deal of persuasion and great promises that we induced the good people of the village to consent to our occupying a dwelling for the night; and when they did so, that which they offered was so bad, so very far inferior even to the last, that, rather than be stifled in a hut, we preferred lying in the open air, covered with hides as a protection from the rain, which kept pouring for several hours. Plowden's continued illness compelled us to remain here two days and nights, during which time we amused ourselves as well as we could, contriving tents and huts among the rocks near the inhospitable village. But soon tiring of this sort of life, we again started, carrying the patient in a litter made of boughs; and after crossing the river Mareb, which here flows in nearly a southerly direction, we arrived at the village of Shaha, where, our lodging being of the same wretched description, we remained the night only, and continued our journey the next morning, hoping to arrive the same day at Kouddofelassy, where we thought of staying a few days, having heard that it was a market-town, and that all sorts of supplies necessary for

my sick friend could be obtained there. We approached it with a feeling that our troubles were about to end, at any rate for a time. Great, however, was our disappointment and vexation on arriving; for on inquiring in every direction for a lodging, we were absolutely refused one, either for love or money. In vain we pleaded the sickness of our companion, offering a handsome payment for what ought to have been gratuitously provided as common hospitality. All was useless: so we were for a time obliged to put up with the partial shade of a small tree as the only protection against a broiling sun. Presently a crowd of the villagers collected round us, curiously examining us, and making impertinent remarks. Patience is a virtue, and no one knows better how to exercise it than my friend Plowden when in health; but reduced as he was by the fever, it is no wonder that this almost unparalleled want of humanity vexed and irritated him to the utmost. We made a sort of tent of the servants' garments; but this contrivance, though it relieved the invalid from their impertinent curiosity, made him suffer more from the confined air and intolerable heat; and a severe attack of the fever was the consequence. At last some of the servants, who had been in the village busying themselves in trying to discover some acquaintance or other individual more charitable or less difficult of persuasion than his neighbours, returned, bringing the welcome news that they had procured us a lodging. It turned out that they had represented us as very great personages on a visit to the king, who was anxiously ex-

pecting us, and would no doubt be much angered at any opposition or inhospitality being offered us. A hint had also been added which was conclusive, for they had worked on the man's cupidity by insinuating that he would be well paid for his kindness; so he now came to us with all pretended humility and good will, politely offering us his house, and regretting that he had only just returned from the deuce knows where (though, as we afterwards heard, he had been seated all the while in his own dwelling), and that his absence had prevented his exercising his hospitality sooner. Too glad to have such a chance, we lost no time in transporting our friend and baggage to the apartment prepared for our reception. It was a miserable shed, carpeted with cow-dung. Here, and often while in these countries, did I yearn for one of the neat, comfortable tenements assigned to cattle in England; but I may truly assert that for several years I have not slept in half so good a dwelling as most of those occupied by our horned dependants.

We remained in this town for five days, during the whole of which time we could procure no supplies beyond a little honey and a few miserable fowls. The morning of our departure advanced us but little on our way; for almost immediately on starting we were caught by a pelting shower, which compelled us to seek refuge in a village some distance from the road, and situated on a little hill, on which there is a church dedicated to St. Mary, whence the place takes its name Beyt Mariam. The rain falling fast, we entered the first house we came to, the proprietors of

which, though at first vehemently objecting to such intrusion, at last came round, seeing that we were determined not to budge. In about an hour and a half the rain cleared off; but, as there was every appearance of its speedy return, we made up our minds to remain during the night. In the mean time our worthy hosts had discovered that we were not half so bad as they had at first imagined, and were disposed to be very civil and agreeable. During the intervals of the showers I took various walks in the neighbourhood, partly to procure us a supper, and partly to enjoy the scenery. In one of these rambles I perceived in the road, at some little distance from me, a large party, with their faces towards the coast, among whom was a white man. Immediately returning to the village, I inquired who the traveller could possibly be. Some of our people guessed him to be a Greek silversmith; others a Copt, who was leaving the Patriarch and on his way to Egypt; but the more prevalent opinion—and, as it afterwards proved, the correct one—was, that it was an Anglo-German missionary, who was returning to Europe, having been rather roughly turned out of the country.

Leaving Enda Mariam next morning, we arrived a little after midday at a large village called Addy Hai Hai. Here we were better received than at any place since we left Kiaquor, for we had been seated only a short time under the shade of a tree when we were invited into the house of a petty chief of the place. The people, however, were curious in the extreme. We had the house filled with a succession of visitors,

who, though for the most part very civil, annoyed us considerably by asking all sorts of silly questions, examining everything we possessed, and preventing our taking any rest, or otherwise employing our time as might appear to us most agreeable. One man, however, asked a servant of ours for a pinch of snuff, but in so imperious a manner that the boy refused him; upon this the man insulted him, which was returned with interest. At length words came to blows, when the fellow, seeing himself alone among our people, and fearing he might get the worst of it, made his escape, but quickly returned, bringing with him a crowd of his friends armed with clubs. One of the servants, on seeing them approach, had closed the outer yard gates, which they commenced attacking with sticks and stones. It was the noise caused by this assault that first gave us intimation of the row. Going out, we found ourselves in the middle of a storm of missiles, and the two parties defying and insulting each other, but evidently neither of them anxious to come to closer quarters. Our servants were not one-tenth as numerous as the others; but some of them, being armed with guns, kept the stronger party in awe. With much difficulty we succeeded in quieting the fray, by leading our men into the house and disarming them, while the more pacific portion of the mob quieted the remainder. The man who began the fray amused me much. He was a big, powerful fellow, above six feet high, but evidently a great coward, though a blustering bully. During the row he pretended to be most anxious for an attack,

even after we had in a measure pacified the others; but a youth of about half his size and weight held him, while he made show as if frantically struggling to get away and rush at his enemy. I since have frequently seen this done in Abyssinia. Even a woman will often hold a very strong man; though no doubt, in all these cases, the captive would have been much annoyed had he been taken at his word and let loose. After it was all over, many of those who had five minutes before been drawn up against us in battle array came and chatted with us in the most friendly and sociable manner.

Next day we arrived at Goundet, situated on the hills which rise from the eastern bank of the Mareb. On the following day we crossed this stream, which makes a turn here, and flows nearly north. It is of considerable breadth, and where we forded it was up to our waists, it being the rainy season, during which period it is very variable—sometimes, after a heavy fall, rising so high in half an hour as entirely to obstruct the road, and falling again as rapidly as it rose; while in the dry season there is barely water enough to wet the ankles. The water, owing to the rain, was rapid, and of a dark red colour. We had scarcely landed and settled on the opposite bank when the news reached us that Mr. De Jacobis, the Roman Catholic missionary, and Mr. Schimper, a German naturalist, were encamped near us. We in consequence set out immediately in search of them, and found their tent on a hill at a much greater distance than we had imagined, being not far

from a village called Haddish Addy (or New Town), which is about three hours' walk from the river. They received us very kindly; but scarcely had we entered when a storm broke upon us with such fury that it was as much as we could do, servants and all, to prevent the tent being blown away bodily. As it was, it proved of little use to us; for, notwithstanding all our efforts, the violence of the wind, tearing up one side of it, allowed the rain to dash in, and we were all soon completely wet through. In about an hour the storm cleared off, and we continued our route to the village, leaving Mr. De Jacobis and his friend to pursue their journey in the opposite direction. Next day we slept at Baysa, and the following noon, in a heavy shower, arrived in sight of Àdoua, the capital of Tigrè.

CHAPTER XII.

Missionaries to the heathen — Amount of their success — Moravians in Abyssinia — Their want of tact — Anecdotes of their proceedings — They excite the fears and prejudices of the people — Public disputation — Indiscriminate distribution of Bibles — One of the recipients — A modest priest — Inutility of sending Bibles to Abyssinia — Need of education — Means of improving the moral condition of the people — Their extreme ignorance — Importance of their being civilized.

IN the last chapter I spoke of an Anglo-German missionary who was returning to Europe. As this is the first and only time I ever happened to meet with any one of these gentlemen, I shall not find a better place than the present for offering a few remarks on their proceedings in this country, and some considerations as to the probability or improbability of the success of their mission, or any other one similarly conducted.

The societies formed in Europe for converting the heathen and others to a faith believed by them to be the only true one, and consequently the only one by which the salvation of mankind can be ensured, are doubtless composed of some of the most charitable and well-meaning men in the land. The thousands of pounds which they annually collect and expend with a view to the furthering of their good intentions must convince any candid person of the sincerity of their motives; still I should fear that the success attending their missions, and

the benefit derived from their exertions, are comparatively small in proportion to the outlay of property and lives, the expectations of the societies, the reports they receive, and the actual mischief done where good was intended. The inhabitants of many countries, naturally offended at the intrusion of persons whose avowed object is to uproot the religion they have received from their ancestors, and which is as dear and sacred to them as our own is to us, have not only expelled and sometimes even illtreated the intruders, but have determined for the future to allow no stranger to visit their country, thus closing against themselves the door, not only to Christianity, but also to civilization. Abyssinia may almost be said to be one of these countries. Our well-intentioned Moravian brethren left Abyssinia, having expended a large sum in books and property distributed and lost, and left not one single convert, nor even one individual who would say more of them than that they were good-natured, open-handed people, but that it was a pity they were such desperate heretics; even those whose gratitude for what they might have gained in lucre induced them to pay the good brethren such negative compliments, were few indeed compared to those who openly spoke of them as infidels and worse than Turks. Some account of what on my arrival was commonly reported as having been their mode of proceeding will show the opinion in which they were generally held by the people. I must by no means be understood to vouch for the truth of these anecdotes—I take no such responsibility in the matter. All I can say

is, that the following and similar statements were made to me again and again by different persons whose stories did not materially differ, and whose veracity I had no reason to doubt; but, on the other hand, as the missionaries had not left a single friend behind, I cannot pretend to state what would have been their version of the story: my sole motive for touching at all on this delicate subject is to show where I consider the failure has been. Had the missionaries acted more in the meek and forbearing spirit of St. Paul, and, by yielding minor points, avoided abrupt collision with deep-rooted and popular prejudices, making themselves, in fact, "all things to all men," so as by conciliation to have gained over some to their own views, and not made bitter enemies of others, the result might have been different.

Once, on the occasion of a fire or some such disaster, the missionaries, hearing the people call on their saints for aid, are said to have *ridiculed* and reproved them. During one of their most solemn fasts meat was killed in the Mission House, and offered to the poor and hungry, as if to tempt them from the observance of the discipline of their Church, and thereby to sin against their own consciences. A member of one of the missionary families dying (I believe a child) was buried in the yard, in direct opposition to one of the greatest prejudices of the country. Even a Mussulman, said they, buries his dead in a burial-ground; and if these be Christians, have we no churches or cemeteries?

Such opposition to the feelings of the people might be less prejudicial to the missionary cause in some other

countries than in Abyssinia, or it might perhaps be tolerated even there in a person travelling for his private amusement, where no ulterior object could be suspected. In my own case, however, I should have thought it unwise to attempt any such innovations, from the certainty of gaining a bad character, making many enemies, and perhaps getting an ugly knock on the head. But the missionaries were unfortunate even in their temporal matters; for instance, the suspicions of the people were raised by the building of a house in a commanding situation, and elevated to two stories, European fashion, while but few in the town consist of more than the ground floor. This house, so strongly built, and large, and high, gave the weak-minded natives the idea of a fortress; and some persons of note, among others a brother or cousin of Oubi's, pretending simple curiosity, requested permission to visit the interior, which was refused. This circumstance, combined with a report, either accidentally or maliciously circulated, that the English (as they were called) had boasted on one occasion that, if they had guns in the house, they could soon batter down the whole city, not a little excited the jealousy and apprehension of the people.

A well or cellar was next to be excavated, and the good folk immediately believed that a subterranean passage was about to be made for some dangerous object. The missionaries had related how in their country roads were hollowed through the mountains; no doubt this was to be a similar one, and report followed report, till at length it was given out that the missionaries had, in

the course of only a few days, perforated a tunnel all the way to Massàwa, on the coast of the Red Sea, a distance of above a hundred and fifty miles, whence they were to obtain large supplies of arms, ammunition, and soldiers, and so take the country by storm: others, more moderate, believed that the whole town was to be undermined, and blown up with gunpowder. These fears and exaggerations were puerile enough, but they did harm, and might easily have been prevented by a little explanation in a spirit of kindness and condescension for their ignorance. The missionaries were also declared to be no Christians, and a public disputation was agreed upon. It would appear that on this occasion one of the brethren waxed warm. I cannot pretend to say whether his words were misunderstood, or intentionally misrepresented; but it was commonly reported to me that by his manner and answers he manifested the most extreme contempt for the party opposed to him, and that he endeavoured to beat down their arguments by force rather than by reasoning. I was told that, on being asked if the brethren were Christians, the answer was, "We are, but ye are not; and except ye become like us, ye will all be damned." "If so," was the reply, "take this" (presenting a cross); "and tell us what you consider it, and how you respect it." "We consider and respect it as a piece of wood or metal, according to what it is made of," was the answer. "And what do you think of the saints (naming some) and the Virgin Mary?" "They were men like ourselves; and the Virgin was nothing more than any other

woman, except that she had a child without previous marriage." This last answer appeared to me so highly improbable as coming from the mouth of any educated man, much more a priest, that I immediately set down the whole as false, or greatly exaggerated; and though frequently assured that it was not so, I always persisted that, if the words were uttered at all, it must have been through an imperfect knowledge of the language, and that what the speaker intended to express was just the reverse of what they had understood by his words. I tried to impress on them that he probably meant to explain, that the Virgin, though by origin a simple woman, yet, by having the miracle of spontaneous conception wrought in her by the Holy Ghost, became particularly distinguished as one favoured by the Almighty.

I would here express a hope that none of my readers will imagine that I attribute the failure of our last Abyssinian mission to any personal faults of the individuals that composed it; I merely wish to point out that the system of preaching "boldly," which they appear to have followed to the utmost extent, and which certainly is the proper one where Christianity is to be taught to the *heathen*, should be tempered with much judgment, when the object is to induce an ignorant, and, consequently, a narrow-minded and prejudiced Christian nation, to abandon the forms of Christianity which it received from very early times. I should not have hazarded an opinion on the subject did I not feel myself backed by the highest possible authority. Though I

am totally unacquainted with the Bishop of Jerusalem, I am persuaded that in his preaching in Abyssinia he must have judged a certain amount of *tact* proper, from the fact that, even to the present day, "Samouel Gobat" is spoken of by all who knew him in Tigrè with the greatest possible respect and affection.

There is another sort of missionaries that has also had its representatives in Abyssinia. These sit under a tent, and distribute Bibles indiscriminately to all who happen from curiosity to come in. Among the many persons I have met with who had received them, one man in particular had two copies given to him, which, as might have been expected, he sold the same evening for a jar of beer, and got drunk on the strength of it. I will give a short sketch of the man himself, to show how unlikely he was to appreciate the Bible for its own sake.

He had in early youth accompanied a relative on several war expeditions. He then entered the service of a rebel chief, named Conyasmatch Govazy, and became a brigand. After this he attached himself as servant to some native merchants, and accompanied their caravans on several journeys; and, lastly, he became an inferior servant to a French gentleman, then travelling in the country. While passing Kiaquor he had the misfortune to pick a quarrel with one of the natives about some grass that he was cutting, and which, apparently, he had no right to, for the man struck him, and he returned so heavy a blow with a club on the offender's leg, that he broke the bone in half. For this offence he was taken prisoner and bound with a

heavy log, nor could any offer of money on the part of his master induce the wounded man's relatives to liberate him. They detained him for a year and a half till the man recovered, intending, in case he died, to put the murderer to death. The wounded man, however, getting well, the prisoner, after a year and a half's confinement, was set at liberty. The good missionaries, happening to pass about the time of his release, thought him a fit object on whom to bestow two Bibles; though, had they first asked him whether he could read them, he could not even have answered with William of Deloraine,—

> "Prayer know I scarcely one,
> Save to patter an Ave Mary,
> When I ride on a border foray;"

for I am convinced that our good friend in question, far from being able to read, never knew the meaning of a single prayer of any sort or description, even though he might jabber a few words without knowing their import.

Another man whom I knew (a native priest) received a copy. He *could* read it. The missionary, perceiving that he appeared to set little value on the gift, told him to be careful of it, as its cost, even where it was made, was considerable (I believe six dollars). The priest very naïvely answered, "Ah! I am unworthy of so costly a gift! Take back your Bible, and give me one dollar; it is enough for me."

The use to which the many Bibles given away in this country are commonly applied is the wrapping up

of snuff and such-like undignified purposes. Many Bibles, however, have been given away, and I have no doubt that the Society at home were well pleased to hear that the Word of God was so gladly received by the people. There is a common saying, that an Abyssinian's first movement on coming into the world is to stretch out his hand for something; and his principle through life is never to refuse anything that he can get for nothing.

But of what use *can* Bibles possibly be in Abyssinia? First, who can read? (Of course I speak of Tigrè, the country with which I am acquainted, and where so many Bibles were distributed.) The answer is simple: some, but not all of the priests, the scribes, and a very few among men of the highest rank. The latter, however, rarely understand what they read, so we will leave them altogether out of the question, and speak only of the priests and scribes, some of whom are rather better educated. Nations, like individuals, are usually proud in proportion to their ignorance; hence Abyssinians generally consider their view of Christianity as far superior to that of any other race under the sun; while those among them who know a little more than the rest look upon themselves, by comparison with the more ignorant part of the population, as beings endowed with most wonderful wisdom; and were they to take up any other Bible than their own, it would doubtless be solely with a view to criticism, and wherever they found it differing from their own corrupt version they would immediately pronounce it to be wrong, and nothing on earth

would persuade them to the contrary. How, indeed, could they promulgate principles which would at once declare their whole system of simony and superstition to be sinful? And even suppose one man in a thousand could be found who had not only sufficient good sense and exemption from prejudice, but also honesty enough to declare it to his own detriment, no one would dare to follow his example, for he would at once be placed in a sort of quarantine, an excommunication of the most terrible kind being declared not only on himself, but on any one who might be seen to enter his house or hold conversation with him, or even supply him with the common necessaries of life. The scribes, who in general are the best readers and cleverest men, would be actuated by the same motives, with the additional one, that if printed Bibles got in vogue, and English principles with them, their means of subsistence would be at an end. What, in fact, would become of them if they had no Bibles to copy, and if the charms and Lives of the Saints, which they now write for ready sale, no longer found a market?

To do any good here, the first step must be, by means of education, to teach the people to think. There might then be some chance of weakening, and eventually destroying, the power of the priesthood and of superstition; but this can only be effected by time and trouble. Money might be advantageously expended in sending out Europeans to teach them trades, and in opening schools—at first entirely under the superintendence of native masters, and without introducing Euro-

pean notions of religion: also in inducing young men of influence among them to visit foreign lands, and on their return to report what they had seen. In fact, any means of enlarging their narrow minds and gaining their affections, without alarming their prejudices, or awakening the jealousy of the Church, might be advantageously adopted. An individual who felt himself disposed to devote his life to the cause, and to lay the foundation-stone of what he might hope would eventually rise into a noble structure, would at the outset have need of the greatest caution. He should commence his career among the people in the character of an ordinary traveller. He might then settle among them, having in the mean time got a little into their ways and feelings. By prudence he might perhaps obtain a small territory to govern. He should then build himself a good house after the native fashion; and, for the more speedy accomplishment of his object, I would recommend him to adopt their style of dress, give feasts and merry-makings, and never presume to open his lips on any subject connected with religion. The next step should be to make friends with all the great men of the country, which he will easily do by the aid of a little "tin and soft solder," but more especially with the priests, whom he will conciliate by a little money to improve and decorate their churches, by inviting them largely to eat and drink at his expense, and by the occasional harmless present of a bit of silk or cloth for their patron saint. By way of assisting them, a sum might also be offered for teaching a certain number of

boys to read and write. The European should not interfere with them, nor appear to take any undue interest in their proceedings; but he might offer a yearly prize to the best scholar, and a present to the master, if his boys showed proficiency. In the same way I would make their very priests the stepping-stones to any object I had in view; and, as far as I am myself concerned, I am certain that, had it been my wish to remain in the country, I could have done almost anything with these people, so long as I had a very moderate income to spend among them. If you can only make friends with the priests, they can and will serve you in every way. But it would be folly to attempt anything in the capital, where there are too many to oppose you, whether you act openly, or, as I should do, by filling their ears, eyes, and brains with a sort of putty made of gold and humbug, or, as the Turks would have it, making them eat a gilt abomination, and persuading them that it is sweet.

Some of my conscientious readers may condemn this somewhat deceitful way of dealing with them, and I should be the last to recommend it, if any other would be likely to succeed; but experience has taught me that the natives, being excessively ignorant, may be considered in a state of intellectual infancy; and that, as you are obliged to sweeten the edge of a cup for a sick child, and persuade him that the medicine suited to his malady will be sweet to his palate, so the only effectual method of ameliorating the condition of these poor people is to blindfold them before you attempt to lead

them from the darkness which their benighted intellects have so long mistaken for light; habituating them by degrees, and slow degrees only, to bear the effulgence of the double light of pure Christianity and of the civilization which is consequent on it. Thus, and thus only, in my opinion, the people might gradually be brought to know a little more of Europe and the Europeans, and to like them better; and then, perhaps, some two or three generations hence, our descendants would have the pleasure of seeing their missionaries received in a different spirit from that hitherto exhibited towards them. Abyssinia, once civilized, might be made the starting point for civilizing a large part of Eastern Africa. A knowledge of the arts and sciences being introduced, and the petty chiefs united under the descendant of their lawful Emperor (which in course of time could be effected by European influence, as a strong party in the country might soon be raised for him), there is no doubt that the Æthiopian empire would soon recover her ancient influence and power. The small neighbouring tribes must necessarily fall under her government, and commerce or war would open a road to many more distant ones, which as yet are almost unknown, even by name. This of course is not the work of a day. Under a separate head I shall speak of what I consider might be done in the way of commerce.

But before I proceed further I must apologize for the quantity and quality of these and all my remarks. Let it be remembered that the author, at the time he

collected these notes, was a mere lad; and he trusts that any want of justness in his conclusions may be attributed to the inexperience of youth; nor must his advancing his views so freely be imagined to proceed from conceit or a high opinion of his own judgment. It is only done in the hope that from the whole may be taken one useful hint, which he might, by affecting too great diffidence, have omitted. He offers his suggestions to the public like a sack of sand from one of the African rivers; hoping that, when the mass of useless dirt is washed away, one little grain of gold may perchance be found to reward the labourer for his toil.

CHAPTER XIII.

Àdoua — Appearance of the town — Fashionable amusement — Arrival of baggage — Custom-house annoyance — Start on a visit to Oubi — Detentions on the road — Addy Nefas — Devra Berbery — A very unprotected female — Difficult travelling — A priest's dwelling — "Church property" — Our host's honesty and good-nature — Addy Argoud — An uncomfortable night — Mount Haramat — Inaccessible rocks — Arrival at the camp.

WHEN we arrived in sight of Àdoua, I galloped on ahead of the party, anxious to obtain shelter as soon as possible; but being mounted on a weak and tired mule, and the road being of a stiff and greasy clay, and in many places very steep, I gained but little by my haste; for the mule slid down all the hills, and stumbled or tumbled over all the inequalities of the plain. My attention being thus occupied, and the rain driving in my face, I had not leisure to enjoy a distant view of the city we were approaching; nor could I, till within a short distance of it, see enough to enable me to determine whether Àdoua was built in the Grecian or Moorish taste. I own I rather expected to see columns or obelisks, if not an acropolis on some of the neighbouring hills. Judge then of my astonishment when, on arriving at this great city, the capital of one of the most powerful kingdoms of Æthiopia, I found nothing but a large straggling village of huts,

some flat-roofed, but mostly thatched with straw, and the walls of all of them built of rough stones, laid together with mud, in the rudest possible manner. Being wet, moreover, with the rain, the place presented the most miserably dirty appearance. Before entering the town we had to cross a brook, and to scramble up a steep bank, in ascending which more than one of our party measured his length in the mud, to the extreme delight of some young gentlemen collected on the top, who laughed and yelled at each successive mishap. This rather annoyed me, especially as, when I took my turn to rise from the recumbent posture, with my nice white trousers considerably darkened by the dirt collected in this and several previous falls, I was welcomed by a double allowance of shouting. It was explained to me that I should only get more if I took any notice of it; and I afterwards discovered that it was the fashionable amusement during the rainy season for the young men about town to collect in the vicinity of any slippery place, and, standing there, amuse themselves at the expense of the passers-by. After winding down two or three streets, filled with green mud nearly a foot deep, and barely broad enough to allow a man to pass mounted, we arrived at the house then occupied by Mr. Bell, whom we were glad to find considerably better in health than we had ventured to hope. Right glad also was I to find myself housed, with a prospect of our getting something to eat.

On leaving Ailat I had sent my dragoman to Massàwa, with directions to follow me to Àdoua with the

heavy baggage. Some days after our arrival he made his appearance, bringing with him fifteen porters' loads. The Negadiras, or chief custom-house officer, hoping I should give him a present to hold his tongue, sent to say that he must examine the goods, as he could not believe them to be all mine, but supposed that they probably belonged in part to some merchant who wished to smuggle in his wares under my name. It was in vain that I tried to persuade him that fifteen loads was not much when one had to bring a supply of arms, shot, lead, &c., for two or three years' consumption. I then enumerated the contents of each pack, even the carpets, cloth, &c., which I had brought as presents to the Prince. He still, however, persisted in his wish to examine the whole, which I, considering the proceeding highly unconstitutional, as firmly resisted, determining at the same time to hasten as much as possible our intended visit to Oubi, and to lay the matter before him. We accordingly, a few days after, started in the direction of the camp, then at Howzayn. Our first day's journey did not advance us far on our way, for we had scarcely been an hour on the road, when, while halting in a shady place to rest Plowden, (who was still a great sufferer,) I was suddenly seized with a fainting fit, and was in consequence carried into a neighbouring house. My indisposition was of short duration, for in half an hour I was well again, and proposed to proceed on our journey; but my companions, not expecting so sudden a recovery, had begun to prepare dinner. On this account, and because we found the house comfortable and its owner

very hospitable, we determined to pass the night there. Early on the following morning we again started, and, after descending the precipitous rock which forms the natural boundary of the province called Dabba Garema, we passed the village of Guddiba, and finally entered the district called Assa. Here we were obliged to halt in the middle of the road, Plowden's fever having returned very severely, and there being no house within three or four miles; but in a few hours he felt so far better as to enable us to continue our journey, and we succeeded in carrying him to the summit of a hill, on which is situated a village called Addy Nefas (the Village of Wind, so called from its elevated position), where an uncle of one of our servants resided. The road up to it was exceedingly difficult, both from its roughness and steepness; but the fatigue we endured in the ascent was amply repaid by the kindness and hospitality with which we were received on our arrival. Honey, milk, eggs, and various other good things were speedily offered us, and we gladly consented to remain there the night, although we might have gone several miles farther, the day not being nearly closed. Towards the evening of the following day we reached a village of Ha Haily, called Devra Berbery, the people of which, having already suffered great annoyance from the frequent stragglers to and from the camp, were much inclined to treat us inhospitably. At last, after long consultation, they fixed upon the house of a lone old woman (a very unprotected female) as our lodging. She half in her dotage, mistaking us for soldiers or

robbers, set up such piercing cries, that the whole population was in a short time about our ears. The matter was soon understood, and the old crone's fears were in some measure explained away; but she was still anything but happy, and I felt pity for her, as, remaining near the hut, she kept prowling about on some excuse or other, and (as she thought unobserved) making off with sundry little articles of her property, which she had carefully concealed in holes of the thatch or elsewhere, and then returning for others, talking to herself and sobbing all the while in a most piteous manner. At last, feeling for the old creature, I gave her a little present, and taking her by the hand assured her that she had nothing to fear from us, as we were only peaceable travellers, who, far from doing her any wrong, would endeavour to give as little trouble as possible, and be very grateful for our lodging. This reassured her, and she sat down by me and entered into conversation, telling me of all her troubles, how she had lost her children and grandchildren and was left all alone. Of course I could not but sympathise; and it ended in her getting up and bringing me a little sour milk and some bread as a present; and during the rest of the evening, although she still appeared to have some misgivings with regard to the servants, she remained near me, and at night brought in all her treasures, and lay down in a corner of the hut behind me, as if to put herself under my protection. Next morning the elders of the village, having, it would appear, formed a better opinion of us than they did on our first

arrival, or perhaps fearing we might report ill of them at the camp, accompanied us a short distance on our way, and then, bidding us a good journey, sent two boys to show us the road, as not far onward was a deep gap or ravine, which might be crossed by a foot passenger in a few minutes, while the mules could only arrive by a long détour. The path, in fact, which we followed was so steep and slippery down the face of the rock, that we were obliged in some places to slide down in a sitting posture. A little below this was a natural cavern, of such a size that it would have formed a commodious place of shelter for a party of twice our number, mules included: and, indeed, we should have passed the day there had any water been near at hand; but, lacking that great necessary of life, we were compelled to proceed, although Plowden's illness rendered travelling very painful to him.

After a short time we arrived at another small hamlet belonging to the same district as the village where we had slept the previous night. While resting here, the attack, which had all the morning been threatening our patient, came on, and we were forced to seek a dwelling-place. To find one, however, was no easy matter, for the only house fit for our accommodation was that of a priest, and he positively refused to give us admittance, as there was Church property in his hut. Ultimately, however, after more than an hour's fatigue and annoyance, during which time our sick friend was lying under a tree, the priest yielded to our threats and promises, and gave us permission to enter,

provided the servants remained outside, and that we would abstain from smoking in-doors. The Church treasure, about which so much fuss had been made, consisted of a few old books, one or two small and roughly-made brass crosses, and some scraps of coloured cloth and chintz, which had long since seen their best day. The apartment was very small, and had no aperture for ventilation but the door, which was so low as to oblige one to stoop on entering; and surely a little tobacco-smoke would have been rather useful than otherwise in fumigating the place, which contained an atmosphere pestilential enough to generate any amount of typhus or cholera. It so happened that a fortnight before, a drover passing this way with cattle had left a fatigued and sickly calf with our worthy host. After a few days the animal died, and the priest was put to a great strait, for he knew not how far his word would be taken by the man on his return. If he kept the skin only, he might be accused of having killed and eaten the animal; and if he left it outside entire, the birds and beasts would not long allow it to remain in that state. He never thought of calling witnesses; but what did he do? He skinned the calf, and having quartered it, hung it up in his room as a proof to the owner of his veracity; and we had a far stronger proof than we required of the sweet savour of honesty. The more our host saw of us the more civil he became, and at last he so far waxed friendly as to volunteer his company at our dinner, which was a rather good one of antelope and guinea-

fowl. He had been watching the pot during the whole of the time it was on the fire, and we could tell to a nicety how the cooking advanced by the proportionate increase of his good nature and familiarity. He afforded us much amusement during and after dinner, and on taking leave of him I gave him a few yards of muslin as a present for the patron saint, which pleased him vastly. I have no doubt he came to the conclusion that the best purpose to which it could be applied for the saint's service would be in the form of a turban for the saint's servant, as I more than once observed him try it on, and apparently approve the effect it produced on his head. This he did by the aid of a small mirror stuck in the lid of a halfpenny snuff-box, which one of our party had given him.

Our next day's journey brought us to a small village called Addy Argoud. We found all the inhabitants out at work in the fields, and accordingly, *sans cérémonie*, took possession of one of their dwellings. On their return they appeared much disposed to attempt our forcible ejection, but thought better of it, and in the end were unusually hospitable. Such, indeed, is often the Abyssinian character. They get up a row for the merest trifle, but as soon as it is over they drop all ill feeling; and it often happens that those who were the most furious enemies become the most sociable and agreeable friends.

We passed a very uncomfortable night at Addy Argoud. The pouring rain obliged us to sleep in the hut, which we seldom did when the weather permitted

us to remain outside. We had managed to procure a stretcher for Plowden; but Bell and I lay together on the medeb or mud couch, which is in every house. Scarcely, however, had we begun to think of rest, when the myriads of bugs which crawled over us made us get up again. Having lighted a lamp of the country (which is only a bit of cotton or rag made into a sort of wick, and laid in a clay saucer with some butter) we proceeded to examine the state of the wall and our couch, and found both literally blackened with these disgusting insects, which ran about till the whole place appeared alive. Every crevice was full of them, and we had only to pass the flame along the wall to burn hundreds at a time. Travellers in Abyssinia must of necessity soon become accustomed to the society of these intruders, which infest every man's couch; and when I, who for a long period had not known what it was to be without them, confess that they entirely prevented my sleeping on the present occasion, I leave my readers to guess that they must have been in rather wonderful profusion. Seeing that all hope of rest inside was in vain, we rolled ourselves up in skins, and slept outside in the mud and rain.

On the following day we passed the mountain of Haramat, one of the strongest fortresses in Tigrè, now occupied by a rebel and brigand of the name of Iskyas. A former viceroy (I believe Ras Welda Selassy) is said to have laid siege to the mountain, and, unable to take it by storm, blockaded it for seven years. Mountains almost impregnable by nature are common in this

country. Many are in the hands of priests, who have on their summits a monastery and sanctuary, such as Devra Dàmo, and many others; and to these the people of the neighbouring provinces send their property for safety in times of war or other disturbances. Almost every great chieftain has likewise his mountain, to which he retires in a moment of need. Cisterns, either natural or artificially hollowed, are on the summit of each, and large supplies of provisions are generally kept ready for any emergency. Many of these rocks cannot be ascended except by the aid of cords or rope ladders, which are let down and drawn up at pleasure. Numerous amusing anecdotes are related of the stratagems employed by some of the more powerful chiefs to get possession of some of these mountain fastnesses.

Towards the afternoon we arrived, in a heavy shower of rain, at the camp of Howzayn, and proceeded immediately to the dwelling of Bejerundy Càfty, the "Ikkabeyt" or steward of the Prince's household, who was appointed by his Highness as Bell's "balderàbba," or introducer, when he visited this country on a former occasion.

CHAPTER XIV.

Howzayn — The "balderàbba" — Miserable dwellings — Their construction — Our introduction delayed — Difficulty of procuring food — Visitors — My negro servant claimed as a slave and entrapped — A present — An Abyssinian camp — The Viceroy and his officers — Supplies from Oubi — Drinking-horns.

It is customary for every person, whether native or foreigner, after his first audience with the Prince, to ask for a "balderàbba," and one of his officers is usually named. He becomes a sort of agent, and expects you to acknowledge, by presents, any service he may render you, such as assisting you out of difficulties in which you may be involved, or procuring for you admission to his master when you may desire it. Càfty was absent on an expedition. His brother, Negousy, was acting for him, and he volunteered to procure us an audience of the Prince without delay. At the same time, as we applied for lodging, he sent with us a soldier from his household to eject some three or four poor fellows from their huts. They were not over-happy at being turned out in the rain; and I really felt for them. A trifling present, however, restored their equanimity at once, and they left their abodes rather pleased than otherwise. We entered them, equally glad to obtain rest and shelter; but in truth, I think I never passed any period of my life more wretchedly than I did the

few days at Howzayn. Of the huts, only one had a watertight roof: it was about seven feet in diameter and five and a half high in the highest part. They are very simply constructed, being only a few poles stuck in the ground in a circle, and the heads drawn together and tied in a point. Some slender green boughs are then entwined round them at intervals, like hoops on a barrel, and the whole is thatched with straw or long grass. Such a hut may be put together in half an hour, should the materials be at hand. It may be imagined from the dimensions I have given that there was barely room for the three of us to lie down in the one we selected for ourselves, and only just height enough to squat, without the possibility of standing. The other two huts, occupied by our attendants, were larger, but of worse construction. One of them had a roof which had lost more than half its thatch; the other was only thatched half way up as a screen, but without any pretension whatever to roof. Now, though this was not altogether the most comfortable sort of lodging for a wet day, yet it was but a small and easily endured part of our vexations.

Knowing that it was customary for the King to send food to travellers as soon as he heard of their arrival, we had expected to be treated in a similar manner, and in consequence had brought no provisions with us. We were, however, disappointed in our expectations, and found the greatest difficulty in procuring the necessaries to satisfy our appetites. During the first two days we were much troubled with visitors. Among others, our

friend Negousy paid us frequent visits; he was cheerful and familiar, even to playfulness,—would insist on our trying strength with him in various ways, and romping like so many children. He was full of promises too when we explained our circumstances to him,—and said he would do his best to procure us admission to Oubi. He amused us in this way for three days, constantly reiterating his promises, and putting us off with frivolous excuses. We were, however, more than persuaded that he only delayed our introduction, in the hope of our being induced to offer him a handsome present to hasten it. Meanwhile we had little or nothing to eat, either for ourselves or servants. We had been obliged to send a servant round the camp, crying, "Who has got bread for money?"—offering at the same time an exorbitant price; but even by this means we procured not a tenth of the quantity necessary for our party. For a small jar of "mése" (honey beer), and a little pot of honey, we were compelled to pay a dollar, although in reality they could not have been worth more than an eighth of that sum. All our visitors were civil and agreeable. All asked us for presents; but, although our circumstances were well known, no one, excepting a lady named Senedou, offered us even a bit of bread. We had given her a little essence of cloves, and she in return sent us five cakes and a dish of meat stewed in pepper and butter.

Another circumstance occurred at this time to add to my annoyance. My servant Barnabas, a negro whom I had engaged at Adoua, was claimed as a slave

by a man named Lick Ingeder. (*Lick* is an Amhàra title, nearly equivalent to a judge.) Barnabas had been slave to the late Lick Atkou, Ingeder's uncle. At the expressed wish of his master he became free after his death; but now the deceased man's nephew claimed him, knowing that there were no legal proofs existing of his right to liberty. Even had there been, he well knew that here, as in many other countries, there is little justice shown to a slave to the detriment of his master. Ingeder came to visit us, and on seeing the man he pretended to take no notice of him, but afterwards employed persons to decoy him to his house, under pretence of inviting him to drink; and when they had got him fairly in, the poor fellow was seized and put in chains.

Lidge Carsai, the third son of Oubi, a lad of nine or ten years of age, had paid us several visits. He first asked us for a little snuff, which we gave him; then for a sword. This we at first refused; but after many and repeated entreaties I gave him the one I wore,—a long, straight, French cuirassier's, nearly as long as himself. He was very proud of his acquisition; but it being so long, and he so short, his wearing it was out of the question; so he had it carried before him by a servant. Some time after he sent it to a blacksmith at Àdoua, to have it crooked, as he disliked its being so straight.

The appearance of an Abyssinian permanent camp is singular, but by no means unpleasing. The diversity of tents—some bell-shaped, some square, like an Eng-

lish marquee; some white, and others of the black woollen stuff made principally in the southern provinces of Tigrè; huts of all sizes and colours, and their inmates scattered about in groups, with their horses, mules, &c., form altogether a picturesque and very lively scene. In the centre is the dwelling of Oubi, which consists of three or four large thatched wigwams and a tent, enclosed by a double fence of thorns, at the entrances through which guards are stationed, the space between them being divided into courts, in which the soldiers or other persons craving an audience of the King await his pleasure. Close around this is the encampment of the "Ikkabeyt," or steward, and his "Chiffra," or followers, of whom he has a large body, used as porters in case of the Prince's changing quarters, and as soldiers in time of war. Around these again encamp the "Zeveynia," or guards. In front of these come the "Nefteynia," or bearers of fire-arms, with the "Negarît," or great drums, while "Fit-Owraris," or generals of advance guard, occupy the front position. [I don't know the derivation of "Fit-Owraris." May it not be from "Fit," face or front, and "Owrari," Rhinoceros, alluding to the offensive weapons of that animal, which are so prominent in front of his face?]

Behind the Prince's tent is the camp of the "Sheff Zagry," or swordbearers, while the "Dejjin," or rear guard, occupies the hindmost position. On each side of the royal abode are the great men, or chiefs of provinces who may have joined their master with their forces.

Every corps of about fifty soldiers has an officer called a "Hallika." His hut is rather larger than those of his followers, and is built in the centre, while they encamp in a circle around him. The "Hallika" is generally a favourite servant, whether he be in the employment of the Prince or that of any other chieftain; and when his master is levying fresh soldiers, every volunteer for service demanding a "balderàbba," a favourite servant is named for this office, and in this way his "Chiffra" or company is formed, he becoming "Hallika" to those volunteers to whom he is thus appointed "balderàbba." As "Hallika" he receives and distributes the pay and allowances of his "Chiffra." The only power he has of exercising his superiority over them lies in his right to deduct a small sum from their allowances. Thus in every point the relations of the Abyssinian "Hallika" to his "Chiffra" are much the same as those of the "Boulouk Bashy" of the Turkish irregular infantry to his "Boulouk." This officer is elected by choice of the "Sanjak" (a chief of four hundred), and deducts a small sum from the pay of his soldiers, with part of which he is expected to give them one meal per diem. The troops in Abyssinia are for the most part collected from among the worst of the people, who prefer idleness in peace and plundering their neighbours in war to the more honest but less exciting occupation of agriculture. They have neither tactics nor discipline, and their dress is the same as the ordinary costume of the country, but usually cut in a somewhat smarter manner

To continue, however, the description of our tedious visit to Howzayn: on the fourth evening after our arrival we received from Oubi a supply of food for our supper. It consisted of forty thin cakes, thirty being of coarser quality for the servants, and ten of white "teff" for our own consumption. These were accompanied by two pots of a sort of sauce composed of common oil, dried peas, and red pepper, but, it being fast time, there was neither meat nor butter. To wash all down, there was an enormous horn of honey beer. Some of these horns are eight or ten inches across at the base, and from two feet to two feet eight inches long: they are from the Sanga oxen described by Salt. I hope future travellers who, on measuring them, may find me incorrect, will not be inclined to accuse me of wilful exaggeration. I give the above admeasurement somewhat under what my memory and the opinion of my Abyssinian servant now with me in England would make it. The advent of these supplies proved to us that Oubi was aware of our arrival, and we fully expected a summons from him without further delay. Another day, however, passed without any invitation, although a fresh supply of provisions was sent us. On the following morning, being the sixth day after our arrival, we were walking out early, when a soldier came running after us to say that we were sent for. Accordingly, not to keep his Highness waiting, we hurried back, and, having prepared ourselves and collected together our presents with as much haste as possible, we set out, attended by Negousy, for the Royal Hovel.

CHAPTER XV.

Visit to Oubi — Native pleasantries on our appearance — Oubi's palace — Ceremonies on introduction — Oubi's state and appearance — Presents — Sketch of the history of Oubi and his family — His father, Dejatch Hailo Mariam — His mother, Mintaíyé — Hailo succeeds Ras Gàvry — His feud with Dejatch Màro — Oubi marries Màro's daughter — Hailo rebels against Ras Imâm — He is defeated by Màro, who plunders Oubi's provinces — Oubi recovers his territory — Succeeds his father — His brethren — His uncles — His brother Marso's vicissitudes — His children — Domestic condition of the Abyssinians — A present from Oubi.

WE had to wait a considerable time in the outer court and doorway before his Majesty was pleased to admit us. A crowd of soldiers collected round us, and amused themselves with many facetious remarks on our appearance, such as "Cat's eyes," "Monkey's hair," "What nice red morocco their skin would make for a sword-sheath!" &c. These expressions were afterwards made known to me; for in those days I was in a state of ignorance as regarded the language; and having myself a tolerably good opinion of my appearance, I judged that their remarks must be highly complimentary. I remember some years after this asking a person with whom I had become intimate, and who had never seen any white man but myself, what impression my first appearance had made on him. He answered me very simply that I resembled a rather good-looking Abyssinian who had lost his

skin. But I must own that our appearance at the time of our first visit to Howzayn was calculated to excite much amusement. We had only recently adopted the Abyssinian costume, and as yet were not altogether well practised in the mode of putting on the cloth. Besides which, our straight hair, not yet long enough to be tressed, was plastered back with butter, and the faces of those of our party who were encased in a thin skin, which I am happy to say never was my fate, were as red as a fresh capsicum.

At last we entered the great hall of the *magnificent palace* of Oubi. It was a round hut, of about thirty feet in diameter, with a large wood fire burning on the floor, which had not even a carpet of grass strewed to hide the dirty face of the original earth. Having been previously instructed, we each of us on entering made a polite but vaguely directed bow. On such occasions the natives usually put their heads to the ground, but, as we were foreigners, such a mark of humility was dispensed with. I have said that our bow was vaguely directed, because in passing from the glare of a tropical sun at noon into a large apartment lighted only by a small door, over which was suspended a curtain, and which communicated with a tent without, it may be imagined that we could not so much as distinguish a single object within. Oubi, in a very patronising tone, asked us how we were. An humble bow was the customary answer. He then desired us to be seated, and we accordingly sat ourselves down on the ground, there being no seat in the hut except the one appropriated for his Highness's

throne. My sight was just beginning to accustom itself to the darkness when we received this permission, but my place being directly under the lee of the horrible wood fire, and sitting as I did within a yard of it, I was nearly suffocated, and in a moment my eyes began to stream from the effect of the smoke, which nearly blinded me. I bore it with the utmost fortitude till I could endure it no longer, and then started up with an exclamation something like "Oof!" and my eyes red and pouring with tears, at which Oubi laughed amazingly. Great men, I suppose, require more heat than others in these countries, as I cannot otherwise account for Oubi's taste in having a large fire in the middle of August, especially in a tropical climate.

Oubi was seated, reclining on a stretcher, which was covered with a common Smyrna rug, and furnished with a couple of chintz cushions, from beneath one of which appeared the hilt of a Turkish sabre. We found him a rather good-looking, slight-made man, of about forty-five years of age, with bushy hair, which was fast turning grey. His physiognomy did not at all prepossess me in his favour. It struck me as indicative of much cunning, pride, and falsity; and I judged him to be a man of some talent, but with more of the fox than the lion in his nature. Our presents were brought in covered with cloths, and carried by our servants. They consisted of a Turkey rug, two European light cavalry swords, four pieces of muslin for turbans, and two or three yards of red cloth for a cloak. He examined

each article as it was presented to him, making on almost every one some complimentary remark. After having inspected them all he said, "God return it to you," and ordered his steward to give us a cow. On our asking for a "balderàbba," he named Negousy, who had already acted for us in that capacity. We then requested permission to retire, which being granted we bowed and took our departure, glad enough to re-enter our huts and prepare for our return to Àdoua on the morrow.

A short sketch of the history of Oubi's family may be not uninteresting, and will serve to give some idea of the irregular manner in which successions are arranged in Abyssinia, and of the little brotherly affection that exists among the children of one man by his various marriages. It will be seen hereafter in this work that the ceremony of matrimony is but little understood here, or, if it be understood, but little practised: hence probably it is that natural children are looked upon in nearly, if not quite, the same light as their *more* legitimate brethren, though even these can scarcely be called *altogether* legitimate, their mothers being in fact rather concubines than wives.

Dejatch Hailo Mariam, Oubi's father, was eldest son of Ras Gàvry, Prince of Simyen, a large mountainous province lying along the west bank of the river Táccazy. Hailo was Gàvry's natural son; Ingeder was by his legitimate wife; and Welda Yessous, Astrat, and Negousy by different concubines. Partly from his birth, and also from his disposition, which was more docile

than his elder brother's, their father preferred Ingeder to Hailo, and dying left the kingdom to him. He did not, however, long enjoy it, for Hailo took it from him by force, and moreover retained it quietly all his life; for Ingeder shortly after died, and Hailo carefully shut up, on a mountain, every one of the family or chiefs whose courage or talents rendered them worthy of his fear. His younger brethren only, being mere lads, were left at liberty.

But I have gone on too fast, and must look back a little on Hailo's life some years previously to his thus coming to power. During the lifetime of his father he had once, when on an expedition into Woggera, of which province he was Governor, been surprised by the rain, and forced to take shelter for the night in the house of a lady of the name of Mintaiyé, widow of a peasant of Jànamora, in which place she still resided. Since her husband's death this lady had, according to some authorities, been a bright, and in these countries most rare, example of prudence; though others, ill-natured persons doubtless, have told me that she was no better than her neighbours, only a little more careful of appearances. Whether, however, the young prince was in reality a very captivating gentleman, I pretend not to say; or whether, as is more probable (since, alas! it is a weakness so common to the daughters of Adam, of whatever colour or denomination they may be), he found favour in her eyes, as she saw him through those most beautifying of all mediums, a title and fortune—however the case may be, there was on the following

day some small scandal talked among Hailo's followers, and a still larger amount among the good neighbours of Jànamora; and in due time a child was born, which child was no other than Oubi, now a Prince of Abyssinia, and the hero of our story.

Mrs. What-d'ye-call-her * took her child to Hailo and presented it to him as his son; but he was far too conscientious to accept the gift, assuring her, with all due sense of the obligation she intended to confer on him, that he had strong reasons for believing that others had claims equal if not prior to his own. Some years after, however, when Oubi could walk, Ras Gàvry, happening to see him, was so much struck with his likeness to Hailo, that he insisted on his acknowledging him. I should imagine that he did this more to vex his son than that he really saw the pretended resemblance; for he hated Hailo for Ingeder's sake, and always placed him in the post of danger in expeditions, hoping to get him killed; foreseeing, as he did, that his younger but legitimate and favourite son would, after his death, be unable to maintain his position against his stronger-minded brother—an opinion which after-events, as we have already seen, proved that he was justified in entertaining. Oubi was, however, acknowledged as Hailo's son, and sent to school at Waldabba—a province to the north of Simyen, and celebrated for its learning and religious houses.

During his lifetime Gàvry had not particularly at-

* The nearest English patronymic I can find to correspond with Mintaiyé, which, in the Tigrè language, means "What?" or "What is it?"

tached himself to either of his powerful neighbours—the Prince of Tigrè, then Ras Welda Selassy, or Ras Gouxa, Prince of the Amhàra country—but paid a sort of tribute or peace-offering to both of them. Dejatch Hailo, however, on coming to the throne, went over to the latter, who received him well, admiring him for his courage, and, as a crowning mark of his esteem, gave him his daughter Gouxa Hérout to wife. His other daughter was married to Dejatch Màro, Chief of Démbea, between whom and Hailo was a most deadly feud, the cause of which I forget; but so fierce was it, that they scarcely ever met without a serious quarrel, if not a challenge or fight, occurring between either themselves or their followers. Gouxa did his best to keep them apart for some years; and at last, to put, as he hoped, a termination to the feud, he gave his granddaughter, Màro's child, in marriage to Hailo's son, Oubi, who by this time was grown up, and remarkable for his enterprising spirit and indomitable perseverance —qualities which in after-life gained for him his present greatness.

Oubi was at this time Governor of a part of Walkait only. His step-father elect, Dejatch Màro, in consenting to the match, required that Hailo should give up to him in addition the provinces of Woggera and Tsàgaddy. Gouxa, as mediator, consented, and Hailo was likewise obliged to do so, though much against his inclination. The marriage was then solemnized, but it failed in its object, for the feud between the fathers of the happy couple continued as fierce as ever. Dejatch Hailo had

by this time, by his wife, Gouxa's daughter, two sons, Marso and Bitoul, and a daughter called Yòbedar, who was afterwards married to Dejatch Sabagardis, Chief of Tigrè. Ras Gouxa, dying, was succeeded by his son Ras Imâm, against whom, notwithstanding their near connexion and the favours he had received from Gouxa, Hailo rebelled. One motive for this was, I believe, jealousy of his old enemy Màro, who it appears was more in favour with Imâm than he. But in Abyssinia little motive is required beyond a chance of gain to induce any man to rebel, even against his nearest and dearest friend: so Hailo only waited an opportunity, with which fortune soon furnished him.

Ras Imâm was called away into Gojam on a war expedition against Dejatch Gosho, chief of that country. His attack completely succeeded, for he drove the enemy before him across the Abai * into the Galla countries, whither he pursued them. Meanwhile Hailo, having collected together his forces, was amusing himself by plundering and laying waste the whole country behind Imâm, even to within a short distance of the river Abai. Arrived at this point, he inquired of a hermit (a man of great reputation for sanctity and as a prophet) what course he should pursue. The hermit answered, that if he remained where he was he would not be able for a moment to resist the forces of the Ras, who, having heard the news of his rebellion, was

* A branch of the Nile, called in Arabic "Bahr el Azrag" (Blue River), and the sources of which were erroneously considered as those of the Nile by the Portuguese, and afterwards by Bruce.

returning to engage him; nor, if defeated, could he fly in safety; but that, if he retired to a place called Maldibba, near Gondar, and encamped there, he would, when attacked, be able to resist seven days, but that after that time he would be obliged to retreat to his own country. No doubt the hermit promised all this merely to get the rapacious army out of his neighbourhood; but Hailo, who was of a remarkably superstitious temperament, thought more seriously of the matter, and followed his advice—determining to try, at least, for a little honour and glory. As it happened, things turned out much as the sage had predicted; for the battle between the soldiers of Simyen and the combined forces of the Ras and Dejatch Màro, though the latter were far superior in force, was waged obstinately for six successive days, and on the seventh a friend of Hailo's in the Amhàra camp sent a messenger privately to him, urging him to retreat, as it would be madness to fight longer against such fearful odds, the Ras's army being, as he said, already double the amount of his; besides which, they hourly expected reinforcements. So Hailo remained that day only, and at nightfall he and his whole army retreated, leaving the camp standing, the fires fresh lighted, and horses and mares tied near together, in order that by their neighing and restlessness the enemy might be led to believe that the camp was still occupied. Unluckily, however, a peasant, seeing Hailo's escape, rendered these ingenious arrangements futile, for he ran to the Amhàra camp, calling out to them that their drunken fish was

giving them the slip.* Màro instantly mounted, with his followers, but succeeded in picking up a few stragglers only, among whom was young Oubi, who when he had heard of the approach of the enemy refused to fly with the rest. He was, however, soon after liberated, and Hailo arrived safely in his country of Simyen.

The Simyenites enjoy but little reputation as soldiers, and are generally ridiculed by the rival countries as "sheep-keepers." There is also a saying that their shields are made of sheepskins. The Galla, previously to meeting them at Maldibba, had, it appears, been encouraging themselves by saying, "They are only shepherds with sheepskin bucklers;" but during the engagement they expressed their astonishment at the unexpected valour of the enemy by remarking, "Truly the sheepskins are as hard as iron."

Màro, after the retreat of Hailo, took and plundered half of the province of Woggera, and also Walkait and Tsàgaddy. These, it will be remembered, were the provinces assigned to Oubi at the time of his marriage with Màro's daughter. It appears that in this family the illegitimate children were always the best of the lot, but that they were nevertheless hated by their fathers. At least, Gàvry hated Hailo; Hailo in turn hated Oubi; and Oubi, as will be seen hereafter, follows the example of his father and grandfather by hating my friend Shétou—his son by a Mussulman woman, and, for an Abyssinian, as fine a lad as ever walked—pre-

* Alluding to the unsportsmanlike practice of damming the brooks, and intoxicating the fish with the juice of the Euphorbia.

ferring to him his puny, stupid, and cowardly, but legitimate offspring, Lemma.

But this is a digression. Suffice it for the present that Hailo detested Oubi; partly, it may be supposed, on account of certain doubts (which we have before alluded to) as to whether he really was his own son; and he preferred Marso, partly on account of the influence which his mother's relationship with the Ras might procure for him in the Amhàra country. Consequently he paid back to his son the treatment he had himself received from his own father. He told him that, as Màro had taken his country, he might, if he liked, collect some troops and retake it, but that he and his army could not leave Simyen, else that province would also fall into the hands of the enemy. Knowing his son's enterprising spirit, and calculating most justly that he was sure to attempt the recovery of the lost provinces, Hailo made this proposal—hoping, no doubt, that, badly prepared as Oubi was, he might fall in the undertaking. But a special providence seems to have followed Oubi from his youth up to the present time; protecting him then against the evil designs of his own parent, and now, in manhood, carrying him triumphantly through greater difficulties than would have served to swamp the majority of his countrymen. He gladly acceded to his father's proposal, and, hastily collecting together a handful of peasantry—part of whom only were properly armed, the remainder carrying bludgeons—he attacked the enemy's troops, first in Tsàgaddy, and then in Walkait; and,

beating them in both places, fairly recovered his territory. Hailo, disappointed at Oubi's success, recalled him, and on some excuse or other placed him in a low and most unhealthy district, called Birrawasejja, situated below Simyen. But he did not remain there long; for Màro, profiting by his absence, collected troops in Armatchoho, and overran the lately recovered provinces. Oubi was therefore obliged to return thither for their protection; and, like a true hero of romance, whatever he undertook prospered.

Hailo at last fell sick; on hearing which news Oubi returned to him, but was immediately ordered back to his government; for Hailo feared that in the event of his death, should Oubi be at hand, there would be no chance of his favourite Marso succeeding him. Hailo survived but a short time after this. When he died his son Oubi was in Tsàgaddy. Marso, a lad not more than twelve years of age, was immediately placed on his father's couch (or throne), and privately proclaimed as his successor. Majjy, the late chief's principal servant, sent off for Oubi, desiring him to lose no time, but hasten his return. Accordingly, he shortly came, accompanied by only a few attendants. On arriving, he sat during the first day on the couch with his brother, saying in a rather patronizing tone, "We are brethren, and can govern jointly." As is customary, the neighbours came to wail with him; but he did not join in their lamentations. Though such behaviour may by some be considered an indecent want of observance of custom, yet I admire it in Oubi, as in him it showed a

determination not to feign a sorrow which he could not possibly feel. For my own part, I hate hypocrisy in every shape, and can only regret that it is a failing which (according to my little experience) exists nearly everywhere, even among savage nations, though in a far smaller proportion than in the hotbeds of civilization.

After a few days Majjy proclaimed that Hailo, before his death, had left the country entirely to Oubi. This was false, for the late chief had on his death-bed, and several times before, distinctly expressed to the same Majjy and to various other persons his wish that Marso should succeed him. The people, however, wisely preferred a distinguished man like Oubi to a long minority, and the chance of what qualities Marso might eventually prove himself endowed with. Besides, in Abyssinia, most chiefs on coming to power do their best to raise their maternal relatives, and put down altogether the members of their father's family. This they do as a precautionary measure for their own safety. In the present instance the people of Simyen were in some alarm lest under Marso's rule they should be overrun by a lot of needy Gallas, and perhaps fall altogether under the Galla sway. Oubi was consequently proclaimed by the customary beating of drums, and installed in his father's kingdom.

At this change of affairs Marso's mother was anything but pleased; still less so when Oubi, in a kind and patronizing manner, requested her son to be seated on the ground, instead of with him on the couch; though he promised, that if he behaved well, he should

take his meals with him. So she fled with her son to Màro.

Ras Imâm sent troops to take Walkait and Tsàgaddy, but Oubi first beat them well, and then, putting a halter on his neck, voluntarily went and offered submission and fealty to the Ras. Pleased at this, Imâm not only confirmed to him all his own and his father's former territories, butalso gave him the half of Woggera which had hitherto belonged to Dejatch Màro. This latter, though irritated at his loss, and astonished beyond measure at the courage and good fortune of Oubi, could only give vent to his feelings by words, and is said to have frequently exclaimed, "How can it be? Have the Simyen sheep brought forth goats?" Shortly after this, however, no doubt instigated principally by the vexation which this disappointment had caused him, he rebelled, and was killed in action by an Agow chief, named Wakshūm Comfu, and Dejatch Comfu succeeded to his government of Dembea. Meanwhile Oubi was high in favour with the Ras, who obliged him to sit with him on the same couch, and made him his Dejjin or rear-guard, a post of eminent danger, and consequently of distinction.

In the sketch of the history of Tigrè which I shall hereafter give, Oubi's biography subsequent to this period is related as forming a part of the annals of that kingdom. As for his brethren, Marso's life has been, and still apparently continues to be, that of a wanderer, his restless disposition never allowing him to remain long in one place or under one master; for

some time he remained with Sabagardis, who had married his sister; then at different times he served under Dori and Marié (Imâm's brothers, who succeeded him, but each of whom reigned only a short time), and, lastly, under Ras Ali, who succeeded these. But he was nowhere a favourite; and when Oubi was fairly master of Tigrè he went over to him, and offered to serve with him. Oubi gave him the province of Enderta (one of the richest in Tigrè), and promised that if he would remain quiet he would never forget that he was his brother, and that as long as he had a loaf of bread he would share it with him. Marso, however humble he had appeared when in want, soon became prouder as he got fatter, and at last turned against his benefactor, and endeavoured to make off by way of Sokota, in order to join Ras Ali at Devra Tàbor. The Agows, however, rose to prevent his passage through their country, and they nearly succeeded, as he alone arrived at his destination, his followers being entirely dispersed, and a great many killed. Ali gave him the government of Gojam, originally belonging to Dejatch Gosho, then a rebel. This chief, however, did not allow him peaceably to enter into his territory, for he attacked him and put him into prison, whence he escaped by means of large bribes offered to the guards.

After the battle of Devra Tàbor, where Oubi was taken prisoner, Ras Ali gave the province of Simyen to Marso; but when the Aboun, or patriarch, persuaded him to liberate Oubi, he also restored to him all his territories, and among them that which he had just

bestowed on his brother. Marso, however, objected to this strange fickleness of the Ras, and determined to hold his government by force. Accordingly, when Oubi arrived, he found his brother prepared for resistance, and much better prepared than he; they fought two days, but the Ras settled the affair by coming up with an army and taking Marso in the rear. Marso has since remained in private life, being allowed a subsistence by Ras Ali.

As for the other persons mentioned, Dejatch Welda Yessous, Lidge Astrat, and Lidge Negousy, Oubi's uncles, they are still alive; the two latter, indeed, are young men. Welda Yessous is blind, having been punished with the loss of his eyes for conspiring against his nephew, and for cruelly treating one of his favourites who refused to enter into the plot against his master; he is renowned for his savage disposition and for his extraordinary appetite, in which however he is, I believe, surpassed by his brother Astrat, who is a perfect ogre, if reports are true. Negousy is celebrated for nothing but occasionally killing a man or two in a drunken broil, as happened once when I was at Àdoua.

Since I left Abyssinia I have heard that Oubi and Ali were again at war, the former being camped at Enchet Càb, the latter in Woggera. Marso had deserted to Oubi, who received him kindly, giving him large presents; among others, 4000 dollars, or about 800*l.* hard cash, and afterwards sent him in command of a foray to Quolla Woggera, accompanied by Obsabius, Gwonda Wussun, and other chiefs of note. Ali,

hearing this, sent against them his uncle Beshir, Bitoul (Marso's brother), and Teddily Hailo, who managed to surprise Marso's party, and take him before he could mount his horse. His brother Bitoul took him with his own hand, and gave him up to Ras Ali, who put him into prison, where he may remain perhaps till his death.

Thus much of the family of Oubi I have gained from hearsay; what I have myself seen refers more to his children, who hate one another cordially in pairs, the eldest and third detesting the second and fourth.

Since writing the above, Lemma, the eldest, is dead; and Shétou, poor fellow! has given up the glorious career which he appeared to have entered on, and buried himself in obscurity in some distant land—a very Sybaris, entangled (if true reports reached me in Egypt) in the net of some Amhàric Lydia. Alas! how many a Samson has fallen into the snares of a Delilah! Still there are few who have thus allowed themselves to be overcome without some motive stronger than the mere temptations of the flesh. Shétou's motive, I have no doubt, was disgust at the unjust treatment he had received at his father's hands for the sake of his more favoured brethren. If the puny Lemma complained that he had few soldiers, the answer was, "Take your pick from Shétou's." Shétou was a soldier; and soldiers in every country prefer serving under men of his stamp to those of his brother's; consequently many deserted from Lemma to join Shétou's camp, but

Lemma made up for it by occasionally having his pick of the best and most choice of his brother's followers; then again, when Lemma wanted money, it was raised from Shétou's provinces; and often has he been in a strait to know how to pay his troops, and sometimes almost how to dress himself. Even when I was there he was so low-spirited at this treatment, that he frequently hinted to me his intention of quitting the country and his father's service. I did my best to dissuade him from this, but, it would appear, to no purpose.

My English readers will doubtless agree with me that we Europeans enjoy more domestic happiness than do the Abyssinians; for truly we have in this chapter seen fathers warring against their own sons, brothers against brothers, and so on to every degree of relationship and connexion. This we may attribute, no doubt, to the irregularity of the people in their matrimonial affairs.

Towards evening our promised cow arrived from Oubi—such a cow! as thin as a cat—an absolute bag of bones, which could never have realised anything approaching to two dollars in the market; such as she was, however, she was immediately slaughtered, and before night not an eatable morsel was left.

CHAPTER XVI.

Visit to Weld Inchael — His hospitality — A fight for a lodging — Return to Addy Nefas — My adopted sons — Oubi's generosity — Dispute with the Negadiras resumed — Our reception of his soldiers — He appeals to Oubi — His disappointment — Departure of Plowden — A jealous lover — Practice of the women on appearance of a fight — Affray with the soldiers — A brave warrior — Tranquillity restored — Preparations for visiting Adiobà — Promised perils — Messrs. Plowden and Bell.

ON the following morning, having sent on our baggage and part of our servants, we paid a visit to old Nebrìd Weld Inchael, or Weldo Michael (son of St. Michael). He is a respectable old gentleman, brother of the celebrated Nebrìd Weldo Selassy (son of the Holy Trinity), of whom I have more than once made mention as having distinguished himself in many patriotic rebellions, and who is now in prison. We were received most hospitably by Weld Inchael, who insisted on our eating and drinking, although we protested against it, having only just breakfasted, and although he could not join us himself, it being fast time. Before we left him he gave us a prettily worked bread-basket and cover, made of a sort of grass, dyed of various colours; and sent a servant to accompany us to Àdoua, and thence to his house at Axum, partly on his own business, and partly to procure for us a large jar of wine. It was noon when we left him, having remained much longer

than we intended, and so it was late when we overtook our people, near a hamlet of the same village where we had slept on our journey to the camp. We had to wait some time before they found us a lodging, and even then we had a bit of a fight for it before we went to bed. It would appear that some of the villagers, quarrelling among themselves about the quantity of bread each was to furnish for our supper, had complained of it as a hardship, and used insulting language when speaking of us. We had just reason to be offended at this, as the laws of hospitality ought to admit of no distinction between strangers of the same country and those from a distant land; their language, too, was excessively gross, and in the hearing of our servants, who, being already provoked at their meanness and want of courtesy, took offence at it, and a quarrel ensued, which, however, after a few blows had been struck, principally on the shields of either party, was put an end to without any serious mischief.

The next day's journey brought us to Addy Nefas, accomplishing in one day what in coming had taken us three days; the kind reception we had previously met with there having induced us to prefer continuing our journey long after nightfall to halting at some strange or inhospitable village. It was consequently near midnight when we arrived in straggling parties, having lost our way more than once, and after meeting with many adventures in the dark, such as tumbling into bogs and holes, &c. On the following morning, having started alone to see that our house was

made ready for our reception, I arrived at Àdoua about 9 A.M., the rest of the party coming in at noon.

I may here remark, that since this first visit I have been to Howzayn and other camps, but never in the same uncomfortable way, for when I became, *pro tem.*, an Abyssinian I had many friends; even two of Oubi's household (though both of them much older than myself) became my adopted sons "(tout-lidge)."* My plan was to go straight to the hut of an acquaintance, and share with him his horse and servant their bed and supper.

During our visit to Oubi we told him of the pretensions of the Negadiras to examine my baggage, and asked him his wishes on the subject. He answered most generously that from the days of Ras Michael, Ras Welda Selassy, and Dejatch Sabagardis (former princes), the baggage of no European traveller had ever been examined, or made liable to pay duty; and far be it from him to establish any precedent that should make him appear less great or generous than his predecessors. (I must say that, considering the cow he sent us in return for our presents, this savoured rather of the smoke than the roast.) He also sent a servant with us to bear the same message to the Negadiras. Immediately after our arrival we opened the question; the servant swore that such and such had been the decision

* "Tout-lidge" means literally "son of the breast." If a man wishes to be adopted as the son of one of superior station or influence, he takes his hand, and sucking one of his fingers declares himself to be his "child by adoption;" and his new father is bound to assist him as far as he can.

of his master, but the Negadiras was deaf even to this, and persisted that we had bribed the man to swear falsely. He moreover treated us roughly, sending his son with a number of soldiers, who, contrary to all usage, entered very abruptly into our house; they came, as they said, to reason with us, though their object was evidently to frighten us into compliance. They were, however, deterred from incivility by the sight of a formidable array of fourteen guns, double and single, which we had been cleaning, and had placed against the wall. We afterwards heard that the cunning old fellow had sent the soldiers with orders to bind us and take us into custody; so we took the liberty of telling his son, when he came the next day, that if such were his father's intentions he had better come himself, and that we would take care to have a breakfast of dried peas ready for him and his people. Bell, having been in the country before, and speaking the language, was our spokesman; and when he told him this, at the same time showing him a bag of bullets, the brave soldiers were completely crest-fallen, and kept their distance. The old man, however, was not to be satisfied; his dignity was offended, because I had not attempted to conciliate him with a present on my first arrival; so, seeing that force and intimidation were of no avail, he sent rich presents to Oubi, which the prince graciously accepted, returning the same answer as before. The Negadiras, though disappointed, and no doubt extremely vexed at the loss of his presents without profit, still refused to allow the matter to rest, but sent to us to say that we

must swear before a priest that we had passed no contraband goods. We answered, that if a Christian priest (the Negadiras was a Mohammedan) came to our house we should have no objection to take the required oath, but that we certainly should not go anywhere for that purpose. The priest never came, and so the matter ended. About a year afterwards I made acquaintance with the Negadiras; I had then gained some little reputation in the country, and he was very humble, apologizing for his past conduct, and pleading that he did not then know what sort of person I was. It ended in our becoming good friends.

Shortly after this time Plowden left us to go to Axum for change of air, Bell and I remaining at Àdoua to put our things in order, that we might be in readiness to proceed on our travels as soon as he should return. Nothing worthy of note occurred to us during this interval, except a little encounter with the soldiery, which was near leading to serious consequences. One of our servants (quite a lad) was in the house of a female relation, when a soldier, her lover, seeing him there, and not knowing who he was, became jealous, and, determining on revenge, went out to collect together some of his companions to assist him. A woman outside, hearing their plans, hastened to tell the boy and his cousin; and they, by way of precaution, immediately closed the door, thinking that even for a parley it were as well to have something between them and the soldiers. On their arrival, the boy endeavoured to prove to the enraged lover that he had no cause for jealousy;

but all to no purpose. The soldiers threatened to burst in the door if admission were not granted them. The news reached our house very quickly, as does all such intelligence in Àdoua; for the moment there is the least appearance of a fight, the women of the neighbourhood, mounting to the house-tops, scream out "Mr. So-and-so, son of Mr. So-and-so, is killed," long before any blow has been struck. In a moment his friends assemble; and thus a struggle frequently ensues, where, had the neighbours been silent, nothing would have come of it. On hearing of the plight of the unlucky couple, two of our servants went out to endeavour to explain the matter; but the soldiers, it appeared, had been drinking, and were not at all disposed to listen to reason. They received the peace-makers with every kind of insult. This was followed by blows; upon which, as they had gone unarmed, our men immediately returned to the house for their weapons. Knowing what was going on, we joined them, in order if possible to prevent anything serious occurring; refraining, however, from openly taking arms with us, lest it should appear that we had come with hostile intentions. Somehow or other the enemy had got news of our approach almost before we had passed our own gates; for we had gone only a short distance, when, turning the corner in front of the church of Medhainy Allem, we were met by about thirty of them, who came down upon us at a run with their lances poised and shields on guard. I happened to be walking a little in advance of our party, and so sudden and unexpected was their

attack, that I had only just time to put aside the foremost man's spear and close with him. He was a little light-made man, and was much encumbered with his lance and shield; so that I had not the least difficulty in holding him quiet, and at the same time keeping off his comrades with a pistol, which I had previously kept concealed under my clothes. I was rather amused at the little man, who kept calling out to me in a half-angry, half-entreating tone—"Let me go: let me go!" Bell had hitherto succeeded in preventing an actual collision between the remainder of the parties; but this appeared not likely to last, as the soldiers kept vociferating—"The Copts (meaning us) are upon us with their guns!"—and many were congregating to their assistance. At this juncture it luckily happened that two priests came up, and by their timely interference put a stop to the proceedings. The boy who had been the cause of all the disturbance was taken by the authorities, tried, and most honourably acquitted; it having been proved that his near relationship to the lady precluded all probability of there being just cause for jealousy on the part of the aggressor. All parties became great friends, and many of the soldiers called on us. The one I had held in the scuffle, afterwards becoming intimate with me, said he should not have cared so much, only that I squeezed his left arm against his shield, and sadly deranged his hair, which had just been newly tressed. So ended this affair; and we were once more at peace with all men.

Shortly after this Plowden returned from Axum, and

he and Bell set out on a tour to visit Mr. Coffin, at Antichaou, while I prepared for a journey into Addy Àbo, a province on the northern frontier of Tigrè, then so little known as not to be placed on any map. My principal object in going there was the chase, and if possible to learn something of the neighbouring Barea or Shangalla,—a race totally unknown except by the reputation they have gained in many throatcutting visits paid to the Abyssinians. Except for such objects the nations have not been on visiting terms for many generations. I was told much of the dangers I was to meet with from the climate and the people, and that the only two Europeans who had ever been there had died. My curiosity, however, was raised, and I felt that I could trust to my own prudence not to expose myself to any unnecessary danger. I have, moreover, always found that, of the perils described to a traveller before he undertakes a journey, not more than half need be believed.

But before I take leave of my kind friends Plowden and Bell, I cannot help saying how sorry I was to part from them,—how much I look forward even now, after more than seven years, to the pleasure of meeting them again, either in England, or perhaps even in Abyssinia. Bell is, I have heard, still with Ras Ali. Plowden has been appointed her Britannic Majesty's Consul for Abyssinia. I wish them both success, health, and happiness; and as for Plowden, can only regret that his appointment should not afford a wider field for the employment of the talents, perseverance, and courage with which he is so highly gifted.

At the period of my return to England I had little thought of again visiting Abyssinia; but "*Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis:*" and it is not improbable that we three may meet again, and do what we have often done before,—eat a raw beef-steak, and enjoy it for the sake of good company.

CHAPTER XVII.

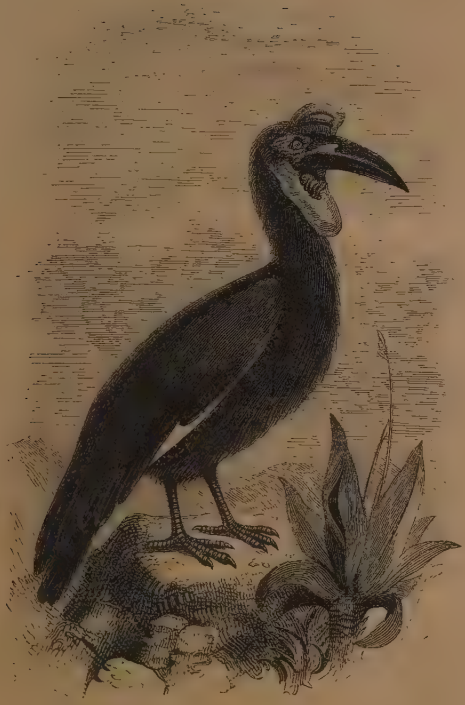
Start for Addy Àbo — Buildings on the road — Features of the country — The Abyssinian hornbill — Axum — Remnants of former civilization — The obelisk and sycamore — The town tank — The High Priest's invitation — A distant relation — Native wine and spirits — Facilities for grape-culture — Meagre vintage — Primitive stills — Dwellings — Their construction.

I STARTED for Addy Àbo, towards the end of September, 1843, accompanied only by a few native servants. On leaving Àdoua, the westward bound traveller, after half an hour's ride, passes the little church of St. John (Beyt Yohannes), a mere hut, perched on a small pyramidical hill, or heap of stones, on whose barren sides grow a few scattered bushes, principally of the quolquol, of which I have already spoken. An undulating road, abounding in picturesque scenery, especially from those points which command distant views of the hills beyond Àdoua, leads to the church dedicated to the Saviour (Enda Yessous). This building, little superior in architectural beauty to that last mentioned, may be considered as half-way between the ancient and modern capitals of this part of Abyssinia, Axum being anciently considered the capital, while Àdoua rose to importance from a mere village of huts so lately as the reign of Ras Michael (about sixty years ago). The princes who succeeded him increased its size, and built for themselves a house,

a sort of palace compared to the ordinary huts; but Oubi, from the situation not agreeing with his health, or from fear of poison, never resides there, preferring his camp, and the house has in consequence been allowed to fall into ruin. Enda Yessous is built on a small but well-wooded hill, on the verge of the splendid plain of Hatzabo, which extends nearly all the way to Axum, a distance of several miles. It is famed for its fertility, producing remarkably fine white teff, the species of corn most esteemed in this country. Near the church, but at some distance from the road, is a spring of delicious water.

From the plain may be seen some of the mountains of Simyen, which, though at a great distance, form a pleasing boundary, thus relieving the eye from the continued flatness of the foreground. As you approach Axum, however, a range of small hills rises on the right hand abruptly from the road. On the rocky summit of one of these, at a short hour's distance from the town, is the church of St. Pantaloon (Abouna Mentellin), a saint formerly held in great esteem by the people, and therefore much attended and rich; but of late years—as apparently there is a fashion in these as in all other matters—he has been much neglected, and consequently, becoming very poor, is only waited upon by one or two monks, who subsist on the charity of the few devotees that still attend the shrine of their old-fashioned patron.

Near this place we saw several specimens of the "Abba Goumba" (Buzaros Abassinicus), or Abyssinian



Male Abba Goumba. (Buzaros Abassinicus.)

hornbill, a quaint-looking bird, nearly the size of a turkey. It is black, the wings only containing a few white feathers. The beak is thick, rather long, and curved downwards, while over it, and attached to it, protrudes a hornlike substance, the front of which is hollow, and the edges rough, as if broken. The bird's throat is furnished with red and blue wattles, like a turkey-cock, and the sides of the beak with a pair of black moustachios, which would do credit to a hussar. The feet also are not unlike the turkey's. I broke the wing of one of these birds with a rifle-ball. Unable to fly, he took to his heels, and afforded us a good run of an hour, when he took cover in some bushes, out of which, however, we soon started him; but he had become weak from fatigue and loss of blood, and, after a short chase, one of the servants, coming up to him, cut off his head with a sword, and so spoilt the specimen. The head, however, I kept, and was not long in procuring another entire skin.

The road skirts the foot of the hills for a considerable distance, till at last a small plain obelisk, on the right hand, and farther on, to the left, a large stone tablet inscribed in Greek characters, proclaim to the traveller his near approach to the city of Axum. From the tablet a sharp turn to the right brings him in view of half the town, which, being situated in an amphitheatre of hills, and possessing a tolerably well-built square church, probably of Portuguese construction, forms altogether a rather agreeable *coup d'œil*.

The church is prettily situated among large trees,

and surrounded by rustic but neatly-built huts. From the tablet, however, to the church there is a distance of several hundred yards, along which lie scattered, every here and there, unfinished or broken columns, pedestals, and other remnants of the civilization of former ages. The remaining part of the town, with the beautiful obelisk and splendid sycamore-tree, at last come in view, having been hidden by the projecting foot of one of the hills. The obelisk and tree are both of great height, but the latter is remarkable for the extraordinary circumference of its trunk and the great spread of its branches, which cast their dark shade over such a space of ground as would be sufficient for the camp of the largest caravan. The principal obelisk is carved on the south side, as if to represent a door, windows, cornices, &c.; while under the protecting arms of the venerable tree stand five or six smaller ones, without ornament, most of which have considerably deviated from the perpendicular. Altogether they form a very interesting family party.

To the east of the column and town is a large reservoir, supplied by a stream or torrent which pours down from the hills during the rainy season, and for some time after, till it has drained them of the superfluous water they may have collected during the three wet months; but when this is finished and the dry season commences, it discontinues its supply. The tank, however, which, with some wells on the other side of the town, furnishes the inhabitants with water, holds out for nearly the whole year. I would often

have gladly plunged into it when coming fatigued and hot from the road, but, as it is set apart for drinking, a penalty is very properly inflicted on any one washing clothes or bathing in it.

We halted under the tree while a servant went in search of lodgings for us. He however speedily returned, bringing us an invitation to the house of Cashy Agavaz (High Priest) Obsàbius. We were welcomed by the holy man and his wife, a merry, good-natured old lady of fifty, who claimed a sort of relationship with me, on account of her great-grandfather having been a Greek. She was generous with her supplies of food, and in a few minutes we found ourselves comfortably housed, with our masticative organs at work, and a small supply of wine and spirits to finish off with. These spirits are of an inferior kind, distilled here from the refuse of the wine or from honey, which latter article is commonly used for that purpose in Àdoua and various parts of Tigrè, though the quantity of spirits consumed is very inconsiderable.

The grape in this country is very little cultivated, although, from the nature of the climate and soil, it might succeed admirably. Here and there a few detached plants produce just enough to satisfy an observer as to the capability of the land; but only at Axum, in Tigrè, and at a village in Dembea, are they grown in sufficient quantities for making wine. The vintage of Axum altogether would not amount to the quantity made by the poorest peasant in the south of France, as only one or two persons attempt it; the

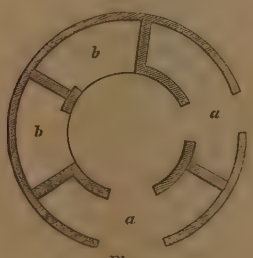
Cashy Agavaz's wife is the principal wine-maker, and she cannot turn out more than fifty or sixty quarts a year, if so much. The wine, too, is of a very inferior quality, and leaves a dark stain on anything it may be spilt upon.

The stills they use for their spirits are of most primitive construction, consisting of two earthen jars with a piece of hollow cane by way of a spout. The grape is called "wainy," the wine "wain tedge," names which evidently mark their European origin: and were no doubt introduced by the Portuguese.

The better houses of Axum are round, the form, in all probability, used by the grandees of the country previous to the introduction of the square ones of Adoua, which appear to me to be a modern innovation, possibly from the Europeans also, as almost all the churches built by natives are round; while Axum, Kosquam, and others built by the Portuguese, are square. Circular Abyssinian dwellings are of various descriptions, from the little wicker and straw gojjo (a wigwam) to the large and commodious huts used by rich men, and often to be met with in Axum and Adoua. These latter may be from 20 to 30 feet in diameter, and by a clever contrivance are often divided off so as to form several rooms. This is done by an inner wall being raised at a distance of about 5 feet from the outer one and parallel to it. The passage between them is then divided by cross walls, so as to form two medebs (or mud benches for sleeping on, *b b*), and on either side of the entrances (*a a*) are left spaces, one of which might be used for

grinding corn, another as kitchen and bakehouse, and the others for store-rooms. The residence of a rich man may generally be known by the number of jars for beer, mead, corn, &c., which these last contain.

The Section here given is supposed to pass through one of the "medebs," and give a view of the other one and the side door.



Plan.

Plan.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Departure from Axum — Sanctuaries — Abyssinian roads — A native traveller's maxim — The gifts of Nature not appreciated till needed — Advice to the satiated — Appearance of the country — The Village of Wind — Injudicious practice of many travellers — Civility the better policy — Illustration of this theory — A bounteous host — Oubi's "Teskar" — Government mode of obtaining payment — Torture of its debtors and other prisoners — Instance of Oubi's cunning — Impolicy of extortion — Our journey resumed — Change of scenery.

WE were obliged to remain at Axum a few days, having met with some difficulty in procuring provisions for the journey. We left it on the 23rd of September, early in the morning. The road from the part of the village where we lodged passes close to the church, and we were told that custom and respect for the sanctuary, which is one of the most reverenced in Abyssinia, required all persons to dismount and walk till they had altogether passed its precincts. Axum, as well as Medhainy Allem at Adoua, is a sanctuary or place of refuge, not only the church, but also a limited part of the town, being "guddam." At Adoua the whole of that part called after the church (in fact the parish) is sanctuary, and no person having taken refuge there can be arrested, although he walk about the public streets in broad daylight, so long as he does not pass the parish boundaries. This protection has, I believe,

AXUM. View of the Church from near our lodging.

been sometimes infringed, or rather the priests have sometimes given up persons thus taking refuge, if guilty of any heinous crime, but never those actually in the precincts of the church itself. When Ras Dorya died, after having entered and evacuated Axum, his death was considered to have been in punishment of his sacrilege.

For some distance after passing the Church, we continued in the great Gondar road. This appellation may give an idea of macadamizing, with footpaths alongside, mile-stones, fences, &c.; but here the high road is only a track worn by use, and a little larger than the sheep-paths, from the fact of more feet passing over it. The utmost labour bestowed on any road in this country is when some traveller, vexed with a thorn that may happen to scratch his face, draws his sword and cuts off the spray. Even this is rarely done; and I have been astonished at seeing many highways, and even some of those most used, rendered almost impassable by the number of thorns which are allowed to remain spread across them. An Abyssinian's maxim is, "I may not pass by this way for a year again; why should I give myself trouble for other people's convenience?" The road, however, here, as in many parts of Tigrè, is abundantly watered, not only by those torrents which, though they dry up shortly after the cessation of the rains, leave a supply of water in the holes for many months, but also by several tolerably copious streams, which flow all the year round. These are most useful to the numerous merchants who pass constantly between

Gondar, Àdoua, and the Red Sea, with large caravans of laden animals, offering not only ready means for watering their cattle, but often green food for them near the banks, when all the rest of the country is parched up and dry, and a cool grassy bed for their own weary limbs to repose on.

How little are the gifts of Nature appreciated by those who, living in the midst of luxury, are accustomed only to wish for a thing in order to obtain it! Ye who have already satiated yourselves with the bounties of Providence, and from constant enjoyment of everything can no longer find pleasure in anything, take my advice—leave for a time your lives of luxury, shoulder your rifle, and take a few months' experience of hardship in a hot climate. You will suffer much at first, but in the end will learn what real enjoyment is. You will sleep soundly when you throw yourself down on the bare ground, while in your bed of down at home you might have been tossing about in a fever all night. You will find more real pleasure in a draught of water, even if it be a little dirty, or flavoured with tar from the leather bag in which it has been carried, than you ever did in the choicest wine to be got in England. You will devour a half-burned piece of gazelle, and find it more palatable than the cuisine of the greatest gourmand in Paris. And as for fruit, it is true we have none to speak of in Abyssinia, but a good raw onion is not a bad thing by way of luncheon. Shade, a bit of green grass, even coarse though it be, a rippling stream, a cloud—all these are treasures in Africa, though not

cared for or heeded in a land where you have trees in every hedge-row, a velvet turf in every garden and in many fields, a river almost every three or four miles, and, as for clouds, perhaps rather too many of them.

The Gova-Dirra and Mai-Shūt together fall into the Mai-Tchaou and Werrey, and thence into the Taccazy, whither also flow the Mai-Shūm and Dábba Bourrou, after having united their waters: these are good-sized rivulets, and all crossed our road.

As for the appearance of the country, it is in general hilly and tolerably well wooded, but much varied in feature. Sometimes you are climbing or descending a hillock, and at others pursuing your way down a shady valley or along the level summit of some table-land. We once lost the track, to the great annoyance of the poor inhabitants of a nearly deserted village, among whose corn-fields we wandered for nearly two hours, till some one coming to order us off was obliged at least to show us which way we were to go in order to obey him. Following his directions we regained the road, not much more than a mile from the place we had left it. A little by-path leading from it up the hill side indicated a village in that direction, and, as evening was near, we ascended till it brought us to a hamlet, so snugly placed among the hills as to be almost out of sight of the road. It was called Addy Nefas, or the Village of Wind, from its elevated position, and belongs to the district or parish of Aghabserài, in the province of Màitowàro.

Many travellers adopt the practice of taking a soldier

from the chief or king of the country in which they may be travelling, to ensure them a hospitable reception in the villages where they may be obliged to lodge. Many also, thus provided, affect a harsh demeanour to the natives, demanding lodging, food, &c., in the most peremptory manner. Now this, in my opinion, is a plan not at all to be recommended. In the first place, it often leads to a quarrel, which is a disagreeable introduction into a village, and not a likely one to obtain for a traveller what he ought so much to court if he wishes to study the manners and customs of a people—their good will and confidence. Secondly, to have an Amhàra soldier with you, or in fact to be supposed to have anything to do with the camp or people of Oubi, is no recommendation to the confidence of the Tigrèans; nor is it at all a likely means to induce them to open their hearts, or let their feelings, especially on political subjects, be known to you, by thus appearing before them under the protection of and accompanied by a soldier from the household of their tyrannical usurper. Thirdly, "Every man's house is his castle." I should very much dislike any one's forcing himself into my house, against my will, and am disposed to act generally on the principle of "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you." Travellers should learn, like Rasselas and Nekayah, "to understand that they have for a time laid aside their dignity, and are to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy can procure." There 's nothing like a civil tongue and quiet unpretending manners to get one on in these countries,

as I suppose in all others. On my arrival at a village I have always found it the better plan to do as native travellers would—wait under a tree till some one asks me in. This is generally soon done, though a little patience is sometimes needed. People often gather round you to look at you, and occasionally make rather personal remarks, though generally they are very civil. Only answer their questions good-naturedly, and take pleasure in making yourself agreeable, which you will find will become a habit, and you will be welcome everywhere. I don't think it necessary to mention, as some travellers do, every place I slept in, and what I was fed with every day, but sometimes I must be allowed to do so, hoping that a few instances of the way in which I was treated, without any bullying on my part, may induce some future traveller to think like myself, that it is not absolutely necessary to enter forcibly into other people's houses, or to demand as a right the supper which one ought to receive with thanks if voluntarily given. What right has Oubi to make his peasantry feed me or any one else? They pay their taxes, whether or no: and if he were generously disposed towards strangers, why does he not supply them at his own expense? I have said a good deal on this subject, because I have not only heard people express their opinion that force, or rather authority, was necessary for a man to make his way in some countries, but I have even seen similar opinions published.

Now to return to our village. Never was a better example of the truth of my theory than I here met

with. I found that all the inhabitants of the principal house to which I had directed my steps were yet out at work in the fields; so I quietly sat down under a large tree and smoked a pipe, and wrote a few of the notes you are now reading. I was thus agreeably and profitably employed for some time, till a very respectable but warm-looking gentleman, followed by three or four younger ones, his sons or dependants, passed me as they went into the house, with their agricultural implements, &c., on their shoulders. On passing, the senior of the party made a low bow and wished me good evening. I thought their going straight in and saying nothing, rather unpolite; but still this was excusable, as no doubt they were much fatigued, and must have their supper before they could attend to us. However, I was not long left in suspense. Immediately on their entry there was a great bustle and moving of skins and other articles of furniture. Meanwhile one of the boys who had gone in with the others came out again, bringing me a large bowl of new milk to drink; and before I had well begun my second turn, after each of my servants had had his, the respectable-looking man made his appearance, still more respectable than before, but not so warm-looking, for he had taken off his dirty breeches and sheepskin in which he had been working, and was now bedecked in a clean white quarry or sheet, with red border. He politely ushered me into the house. The bustle we had heard had been occasioned by their placing skins, a couch, &c., in the best hut, and removing some corn-jars and other uten-

sils which had formerly occupied it. Having himself arranged the couch for me, he seated me on it, and then going out brought us a good supply of provisions, serving me with his own hands, and putting into my mouth the very supper which no doubt was intended for himself; nor could I even induce him to sit down with me, although he must have been very hungry. He also gave us abundance of milk, and corn for the animals, excusing himself for what he called scantiness of hospitality by saying that the poverty of the times and his late losses had rendered it out of his power to receive a stranger of distinction as he would otherwise have wished to do, or even as he always had done before the late oppression had ruined him. Nor was this an excuse made up for the occasion, as I had afterwards reason to know.

At the last great levy of taxes, called Oubi's "teskar," the greater part of the people had run away from their villages. In such cases the "chickka," or petty chiefs of villages, become responsible for the payment of the whole sum due by the fugitives. Our good landlord, Temmenou, was thus rendered liable for sixteen "tchàn" or "intalams" of corn, each of eight "madigas." This, if measured with the "Àdoua," or ordinary measure, might be worth at the time about 60 dollars; but on this occasion the "Gual Ourai," a measure more than double the "Àdoua," was used; nay, I believe, even invented for the purpose. Sixty dollars (or 12*l.*) is a large sum for an Abyssinian farmer; but double that amount almost reduced our poor friend to bankruptcy.

He was obliged to sell his horse, mule, and several plough oxen to meet the amount; and even now, part was unpaid, and he was living in perpetual fear of a visit from the soldiers of Oubi.

The Abyssinians have no sheriffs' officers, sponging-houses, Queen's Benches, or Courts through which insolvent debtors may pass and get "whitewashed." When a man owes money to the Government a band of soldiers are sent to feed on him till he pays what is due. They treat him brutally as a matter of course, and oblige him to provide them with the most expensive luxuries, such as butter, honey (of which they make mead), the finest bread, when probably none is to be met with in the neighbourhood; and all these in ridiculously large quantities, wasting what they cannot consume. This treatment of course in no way tends to assist the man in collecting money to pay his debt. Thus, if he cannot borrow, he is generally reduced to utter ruin; and then who knows or cares what may become of him?

They have a plan of extortion rather ingenious, but horribly cruel. The debtor is put in prison and chained by the arm. The iron which is placed round his wrist is not clasped, but is merely a strong hoop, opened by force to allow the hand to enter, and then hammered tight between two stones. At first it is only made tight enough to prevent any possibility of the prisoner's escape. After some time, however, if the sum required be not forthcoming, it is knocked a little tighter, and so by degrees till the hand dies, the nails drop out, and

the poor prisoner is at best maimed for life. Death sometimes ensues from this treatment, as in the following case.

When our countryman Coffin got into ill favour with Oubi, and thought himself safer at the coast than in his power, his son John was taken and put on a mountain with the iron on his hand, as I have described. He remained tortured for some time, losing first his hand, then his eyesight, and at last he died from the treatment.

Hence it will be seen that this species of torture, which in principle nearly resembles the "boot" of olden times in England, is not only applied for extortion in money matters, but to effect any purpose that the employer of it may desire from his prisoner, as in the case of John Coffin it was used in the hope of inducing his father's return. I must however say, that I have only heard of rare instances of this torture being adopted, especially under Oubi's authority. I believe I am right in my statement as regards John Coffin's death. I was at Àdoua at the time, and such was the report I heard all over the country, and such the account I wrote at the time to his father. Reports, however, on such matters, which are kept tolerably secret, may be erroneous; and though as long as I was in the country it was universally believed, yet, should it have been afterwards contradicted, I hope some of our friends there will take the trouble to correct the statement, for the credit of a nation for which, notwithstanding its many faults, I cannot help feeling considerable attachment.

But to return to Temmenou and the taxation. The cause of his being called Oubi's "teskar" is an amusing instance of that gentleman's cunning, and may at the same time serve to show the despotism exercised by some of the Princes of Abyssinia over their subjects. Oubi was, or pretended to be, lying dangerously ill at Howzayn; on which account admittance to his presence was granted to no one but his chosen attendants. This continuing a long time, a report arose in the camp, and was quickly circulated throughout the country, that he was dead, and that his death was kept a secret till some one should be chosen to succeed him, lest the people of Tigrè should rise in the moment of confusion and throw off the yoke of the Simyen family, while they were disputing among themselves who was to succeed the deceased. The report no doubt had its origin from Oubi himself;—a trick to try the people, and then plunder them. Certainly they were not to blame in the matter, for the story took rise first among his soldiers. However, at the very moment when all were congratulating themselves on his death, and no doubt many plans were forming for a revolt, one day Oubi appeared in his tent, looking in rather better health than usual; and a proclamation was beaten in all the principal markets, something to this effect:—"Oubi says, 'I am well: thank God. But since my good people have thought fit to make me dead and buried, it is but just that they should provide me a teskar.'"*

* Teskar is a sort of funereal feast, where charities are bestowed on the poor and the priests.

Then followed the terms of the contribution to be levied. This tax fell on all Tigrê, but the part we were now in was perhaps one of the least able to support it. The whole of this north-western part of Tigrè, from the Taccazy to the Mareb, and from Axum to the Shangalla country, is governed by Lemma, Oubi's eldest son. He is young and foolish, and, forgetting that the more he takes this year the less he will have for the next,—in fact, acting altogether on the plan of the old woman with the goose that laid golden eggs, he has, by pillaging the peasantry to enrich his brutal soldiery, entirely ruined the country.

The above comparison is not at all inapplicable to the case. Shiré, once the richest and most productive province of Tigrè, and still capable of becoming so under a prudent government, might indeed have laid golden eggs for a wise ruler. Now the land is nearly deserted. Where once were populous villages with their markets and a happy and thriving people, the traveller now sees but a few wretched huts, vast tracts of fertile land lying uncultivated, and, of the few inhabitants that remain, many that were formerly owners of several yoke of oxen each are now to be found clubbing together to cultivate just enough corn to pay their taxes and keep themselves and their families from starvation.

In the evening I took a stroll, which was prolonged considerably beyond what I had intended by the wild beauty of the neighbouring scenery and by three wild boars that I found feeding in some of the villagers' corn-

fields, and which, apparently conscious that they deserved punishment for the trespass they were committing, never allowed me to approach them, though they led me a wild-goose chase, or rather a wild-boar chase, of two or three hours' duration, when getting tired of it I returned very late to my hospitable quarters. Next morning, having parted with Temmenou, who had insisted on accompanying us some distance to set us right on our way, we resumed our route.

Near the village I found a great quantity of large round pebbles, which, on being broken, were found to be hollow, and lined with an incrustation of beautiful amethyst-coloured crystals, some nearly an inch long.

After leaving the lovely plain of Mai-Towàrs, the road passes for some distance through a hilly and rocky tract of country, winding through woods of acacias and other shrubs, and at one part running along the brink of an almost precipitous ravine. A few torrents,—at this season of the year still containing a little water, but soon to become dry courses, till the next rains replenish them—and a hamlet or two were passed before we arrived at the stream of Tambūkh, which borders the plain of Solekhlekha. What a different style of scenery was that now before us from that which we had just left!—the one a vast plain, apparently fertile, but altogether uncultivated; the other a wild, barren mass of forest and rocks. The change was, as it were, from one country to another, quite differing from it in every feature, and yet without any gradation. One foot

might have been in the Alps while the other was in a gentleman's park in England.

At this point we halted for a short time to rest the porters. We were about to leave the road to Gondar, which runs west, while that which we were to follow takes a northerly direction.

CHAPTER XIX.

Botany and ornithology — Unhealthy valleys — Beauties of the plain — Monkeys — Their employments — The Cynocephali — Tactics on their forays — Leaders and scouts — Sagacity — Dwellings — The leopard their greatest enemy — Formidable antagonists — Sometimes attack women — Their cleverness not entirely dependent on instinct — Anecdote — Instance of attachment — Powers of mimicry — Mode of capturing them — The showman's story — Ingenious kite-catching — A curious remedy — A caution to mothers — Mai Quollow — Politeness of the chief — His household.

IT can hardly be expected that I could find much to interest me in a vast open plain like the one we were crossing. Had I been a botanist I should no doubt have met with much to occupy my attention in that branch of natural history, for there was to all appearance a great variety of flowers growing in the grass; among them a kind of scarlet aloe, which is to be met with almost everywhere in Tigrè, and appears, like our gorse, to flower at all seasons, forming a pretty object in the foreground. The many varieties of mimosas too, with their different-coloured flowers—pink, yellow, and white—appear to be spread over the whole face of the country, whether rock or plain, hill or valley. When in blossom many of them emit a fragrance so powerful as to render the whole neighbourhood more odorous than a perfumer's shop. The jessamine is seen in profusion in many parts, but principally on the hills; and there

is also a beautiful parasitical creeper, which grows like the mistletoe from the bark of other trees. It has a bright dark-green fleshy leaf, with brilliant scarlet flowers (an æschynanthus).

I shot a few birds—some plantain-eaters and whidahs at Aghabsarei, and a few hawks, and others—on the plain; but in Abyssinia the "quollas" or deep valleys are the best places for natural history of all kinds. You must, however, be cautious not to descend into them at an unfavourable time, as in so doing there is great risk of being carried off by the fevers which prevail at some seasons of the year, and which are always highly dangerous, and often fatal.

About half way across the plain runs a beautiful stream, which, coming down from the hills to the westward of Maidemas, crosses the road, forming many pretty cascades and eddies with the large stones that occupy its bed, and, dashing onward, falls into a deep ravine, or crack in the plain, whence at length it joins the Mareb. On the north side of the stream are two copses or plantations, one close to the bank, the other at about a hundred yards from it, but both growing so regularly, and the different trees so well distributed for effect of mass and colour, that you might easily deceive yourself into the idea of the whole scene being carefully arranged by some landscape gardener of exquisite taste. Had it really been so, he could not have chosen a prettier spot, nor one where his labour would have been more profitably bestowed, than at the half-way halt on the wide and monotonous plain we were crossing. From

the vicinity of water the grass round these plantations was of a bright green, unlike the dry hay of the plain; and this formed no slight addition to its merits in the eyes both of the mules and their masters.

The ravine down which the brook fell was well wooded, and the trees were filled with the "tota" or "waag," a beautiful little greenish-grey monkey, with black face and white whiskers. I followed a troop of these for a long time, while the porters and servants were resting —not at all with the intention of hurting them, but merely for the pleasure of watching their movements. If you go tolerably carefully towards them they will allow you to approach very near, and you will be much amused with their goings-on, which differ but little from those of the large no-tailed monkeys, "Beni Adam." You may see them quarrelling, making love, mothers taking care of their children, combing their hair, nursing and suckling them; and the passions—jealousy, anger, love—as fully and distinctly marked as in men. They have a language as distinct to them as ours is; and their *women* are as noisy and fond of disputation as any fish-fag in Billingsgate.

The monkeys, especially the Cynocephali, who are astonishingly clever fellows, have their chiefs, whom they obey implicitly, and a regular system of tactics in war, pillaging expeditions, robbing corn-fields, &c. These monkey-forays are managed with the utmost regularity and precaution. A tribe, coming down to feed from their village on the mountain (usually a cleft in the face of some cliff), brings with it all its members,

male and female, old and young. Some, the elders of the tribe, distinguishable by the quantity of mane which covers their shoulders, like a lion's, take the lead, peering cautiously over each precipice before they descend, and climbing to the top of every rock or stone which may afford them a better view of the road before them. Others have their posts as scouts on the flanks or rear; and all fulfil their duties with the utmost vigilance, calling out at times, apparently to keep order among the motley pack which forms the main body, or to give notice of the approach of any real or imagined danger. Their tones of voice on these occasions are so distinctly varied, that a person much accustomed to watch their movements will at length fancy—and perhaps with some truth—that he can understand their signals.

The main body is composed of females, inexperienced males, and young people of the tribe. Those of the females who have small children carry them on their back. Unlike the dignified march of the leaders, the rabble go along in a most disorderly manner, trotting on and chattering, without taking the least heed of anything, apparently confiding in the vigilance of their scouts. Here a few of the youth linger behind to pick the berries off some tree, but not long, for the rear guard coming up forces them to regain their places. There a matron pauses for a moment to suckle her offspring, and, not to lose time, dresses its hair while it is taking its meal. Another younger lady, probably excited by jealousy or by some sneering look or word,

pulls an ugly mouth at her neighbour, and then, uttering a shrill squeal highly expressive of rage, vindictively snatches at her rival's leg or tail with her hand, and gives her perhaps a bite in the hind quarters. This provokes a retort, and a most unladylike quarrel ensues, till a loud bark of command from one of the chiefs calls them to order. A single cry of alarm makes them all halt and remain on the *qui vive*, till another bark in a different tone reassures them, and they then proceed on their march.

Arrived at the corn-fields, the scouts take their position on the eminences all round, while the remainder of the tribe collect provision with the utmost expedition, filling their cheek-pouches as full as they can hold, and then tucking the heads of corn under their armpits. Now, unless there be a partition of the collected spoil, how do the scouts feed?—for I have watched them several times, and never observed them to quit for a moment their post of duty till it was time for the tribe to return, or till some indication of danger induced them to take to flight. They show also the same sagacity in searching for water, discovering at once the places where it is most readily found in the sand, and then digging for it with their hands just as men would, relieving one another in the work if the quantity of sand to be removed be considerable.

Their dwellings are usually chosen in clefts of rocks, so as to protect them from the rain, and always placed so high that they are inaccessible to most other animals. The leopard is their worst enemy, for, being nearly as

good a climber as they, he sometimes attacks them, and then there is a tremendous uproar. I remember one night, when outlying on the frontier, being disturbed in my sleep by the most awful noises I ever heard—at least they appeared as such, exaggerated by my dreams. I started up, thinking it was an attack of the negroes, but I soon recognised the voices of my baboon friends from the mountain above. On my return home I related the fact to the natives, who told me that a leopard was probably the cause of all this panic. I am not aware how he succeeds among them. The people say that he sometimes manages to steal a young one, and make off, but that he seldom ventures to attack a full-grown ape. He would doubtless find such an one an awkward customer; for the ape's great strength and

Skull of the Dog-faced Baboon (*Hamadryadus Cynocephalus*).

activity, and the powerful canine teeth with which he is furnished, would render him a formidable enemy, were he, from desperation, forced to stand and defend his life. It is most fortunate that their courage is only sufficiently great to induce them to act on the defensive. This indeed they only do against a man when driven to it by fear: otherwise they generally prefer prudence to valour. Had their combativeness been proportioned to their physical powers, coming as they do in bodies of two or three hundred, it would have been impossible for the natives to go out of the village except in parties, and armed; and, instead of little boys, regiments of armed men would be required to guard the corn-fields.

I have, however, frequently seen them turn on dogs, and have heard of their attacking women whom they may have accidentally met alone in the roads or woods. On one occasion I was told of a woman who was so grievously maltreated by them, that, although she was succoured by the opportune arrival of some passers-by, she died a few days after, from the fright and ill-treatment she had endured.

To show that their cleverness depends in some measure upon powers of reflection, and not entirely on that instinct with which all animals are endowed, and which serves them only to procure the necessaries of life and to defend themselves against their enemies, I will relate an anecdote to which I can testify as an eye-witness. At 'Khartūm, the capital of the provinces of Upper Nubia, I saw a man showing a large male and two females of this breed, who performed several clever

tricks at his command. I entered into conversation with him as to their sagacity, the mode of teaching them, and various other topics relating to them. Speaking of his male monkey, he said that he was the most dexterous thief imaginable, and that every time he was exhibited he stole dates and other provisions sufficient for his food for the day. In proof of this he begged me to watch him for a few minutes. I did so, and presently the keeper led him to a spot near a date-seller, who was sitting on the ground with his basket beside him. Here his master put him through his evolutions; and, although I could perceive that the monkey had an eye to the fruit, yet so completely did he disguise his intentions that no careless observer would have noticed it. He did not at first appear to care about approaching the basket; but gradually brought himself nearer and nearer, till at last he got quite close to its owner. In the middle of one of his feats he suddenly started up from the ground on which he was lying stretched like a corpse, and, uttering a cry as of pain or rage, fixed his eyes full at the face of the date-seller, and then, without moving the rest of his body, stole as many dates as he could hold in one of his hind hands. (Apes are not quadru*peds*, but quadru*mana*.) The date-man being stared out of countenance, and his attention diverted by this extraordinary movement, knew nothing about the theft till a bystander told him of it, and then he joined heartily in the laugh that was raised against him. The monkey, having very adroitly popped the fruit into his cheek-pouches, had moved off a few

yards, when a boy in the crowd round him pulled him sharply by the tail. Conscience-stricken, he fancied that it had been done in revenge by the date-seller whom he had robbed; and so, passing close by the true offender and between the legs of one or two others in the circle, he fell on the unfortunate fruiterer, and would no doubt have bitten him severely but for the interference of his master, who came to the rescue.

I have never thought it worth while to teach monkeys of my own any tricks, always preferring to watch their natural actions. I had in Abyssinia a young one of the same breed as the last mentioned. From the first day she was given to me her attachment was remarkable, and nothing would induce her to leave me at any time; in fact her affection was sometimes ludicrously annoying. As she grew up she became more sedate, and was less afraid of being left alone. She would sit and watch whatever I did, with an expression of great intelligence; and the moment I turned my back she would endeavour to imitate what I had been doing. Mr. Rodatz, master of the German brig "Alf," coming up the country for a cargo of animals for Mauritius, gave me a copy of 'Peter Simple,' the first English book, besides the Bible and Nautical Almanac, that I had seen for more than two years. As soon as I was alone I of course sat down and began greedily to feast on its contents, though I had read it several times before leaving England. "Lemdy" was as usual seated beside me, at times looking quietly at me, occasionally catching a fly, or, jumping on my shoulder, endeavouring to pick out the

blue marks tattooed there. At last I got up to light a pipe, and on my return found she had taken my seat with the book on her knee, and with a grave expression of countenance was turning over the leaves page by page, as she had observed me to do—with the difference only that, not being able to read their contents, she turned one after the other as quickly as possible, and that, from her arms being short, and she not yet much used to books, she tore each page from the top nearly to the bottom. She had completed the destruction of half the volume before I returned. During my momentary absences she would often take up my pipe and hold it to her mouth till I came back, when she would restore it to me with the utmost politeness.

These monkeys are caught in various ways. One plan adopted by the Arabs of Tàka has struck me as the most simple, and at the same time as likely to succeed as any other. Large jars of the common country beer, sweetened with dates, and drugged with the juice of the "òscher" (Asclepias arborea), are left near the places where they come to drink. The monkeys, pleased with the sweetness of the beverage, drink largely of it, and, soon falling asleep, are taken up senseless by the Arabs, who have been watching from a distance.

To conclude this subject, I must return to my friend the showman at 'Khartūm, although in so doing I advance more than three years on my original story. I became very intimate with him and his monkeys—so much so that I travelled with them for some days, acting

as his assistant, my duty being to keep the ring, which I did by gracefully swinging round me two wooden balls covered with red cloth, and fastened, one at each end, to a rope similarly ornamented; and occasionally to assist the monkeys in collecting coppers. I passed a very agreeable time with him, and he told me many anecdotes of monkeys, as well as the usual tales of ghouls, fire-worshippers, &c.; for which all Egyptians, especially of his erratic habits, are celebrated.

One of his stories has occurred to me rather *à propos* of our subject, which may amuse some of my juvenile readers, and at the same time show what a high opinion the Arabs have of a monkey's intellectual powers. My friend the "bahluàn" assured me that he believed it. A friend of his, a very credible man, one who prayed and fasted, had told him the story, and he believed it on his account, as well as from his own experience of the sagacity of these animals. The story began as usual with a most beautiful palace in a most beautiful city, belonging to a most wise and just king, who had a most beautiful daughter, and a most cunning but wicked wizír. Nearly all Arab stories begin something after this fashion, but I remember no more of that part of the story, than that the king had ordered the wizír to be cast into prison, and that he was sitting smoking at a window looking into the great square before his palace, probably thinking whom he should choose to succeed his disgraced minister. It so happened that a monkey-man, fatigued by his day's work, seated himself with his monkey in the square exactly under the

window where the king was smoking, and, having lighted a fire, prepared food wherewith to refresh himself. While the pot was yet boiling he heard the muezzin's

> " clear warning voice,
> " Which issued round the neighbouring minaret;"

and, like a good Mussulman, rose immediately to perform his ablutions previously to prayer. Before going he consigned the cookery to the care of the monkey, who, it appears, among his other accomplishments, had been taught to mind that the meat was not over-done, and that the pot did not boil over; accordingly, when his master was gone, he sat down by the fire, and employed his leisure time in investigating the contents of his fur, trying to pick up bits of red-hot embers, and burning his fingers in the attempt, rubbing them on the ground for a few minutes, and then burning them again, and such like innocent and agreeable diversions. After some time, thinking that the fowl which was boiling must be nearly cooked, he lifted up the lid and tasted it; finding it very good, he soon tasted it again, and so on, till at last he had eaten it all up. He did not become aware of this grievous consummation till, on searching for a bit more, he found nothing but bones and broth, and then, what a fright he was in! Picturing to himself the just rage of his master on his return, he moaned and chattered and scratched his sides, first with one hand and then the other, rubbed his fingers on the ground, and did a good many other little tricks which frightened monkeys are apt to do, till at last, most sagely

reflecting that none of these expedients would get him out of his scrape or fill the pot, he set his brains to work to discover some method of effecting this. He watched with a longing eye a number of kites that were soaring over his head, but how was he to catch one? At last a happy thought struck him, and he chuckled with delight.

Nature has provided these animals with two pink pads behind, on which to seat themselves, and it occurred to him that their resemblance to raw meat might assist him in entrapping one of the hungry birds; so having rolled himself in the dust and ashes till his fur was quite white, he put himself in the posture which a little boy would take just before turning a summerset—that is, with his head on the ground, and in this position he looked exactly like a heap of dust, with a lump of raw meat at the top of it. Two or three kites soon approached, circling round and round, till at last one bolder than the rest pounced at the supposed meat, and was immediately seized by the delighted monkey by its wing, and, notwithstanding all its struggles, pecks, and scratches, was poked alive, feathers and all, into the boiling broth.

The Sultan had been watching the monkey all the while from his window, and no doubt it was he who told the tale to some one who repeated it to my friend's veracious friend, but I have forgotten the conclusion of it. Any one, however, who has heard an Arab tell a story will guess that it was something to the purport that the master on his return would have whipped the monkey, had not the Sultan prevented him, and given

orders for a bath and change of raiment for both, desiring them to tell their adventures; then in all probability the just and wise monarch ordered his cunning and wicked wizír to lose his head, and made one or other of our friends (man or monkey), or both of them, wizír in his place, and then married one or other, or both of them, to his most beautiful daughter, and at last, at his death, one or other, or both of them, succeeded to his kingdom, and were blessed with twelve male children, and enjoyed happiness twenty-four degrees, and reigned beloved and respected by everybody for sixty years and seventy mornings.

I might cite many more anecdotes of the intelligence of these animals, both from personal observation and stories I have heard, did I not conceive that they have already taken up sufficient of my time as well as my reader's. Meanwhile the porters and baggage have advanced a good distance on the road, and it may be as well to rejoin them.

I seldom rode, preferring always to walk, excepting after meals, or when the country was dull and uninteresting, and then I generally managed to doze on my saddle. To-day, after lunch, I was riding along half asleep, enjoying my pipe and the warmth of the midday sun, when Saïd pointed out to me, in a field at a short distance off, a wild sow and her four little pigs feeding. Having but little meat in our provision, we thought this an opportunity of stocking our larder, which ought not to be neglected, and so off we set in pursuit of them. This is about the only time I have

ever seen a wild pig out feeding at so unusual an hour; these were evidently aware of their indiscretion, and kept strict guard; for although we made our approach with the utmost caution, they perceived us, and it was not till after a long pursuit and many circuitous advances that, aided by a ravine down which we crawled, we succeeded in getting within shot of them. I killed the sow, and Saïd shot a silly porker that came running directly towards us. Some soldiers had followed us from the road; and as soon as the sow fell, one of them ran up to her, and, piercing her neck with his lance, greedily drank the blood which poured out. On my inquiring the motive of such an extraordinary proceeding, he told me that the blood and flesh of the pig were considered as a cure for a disagreeable malady with which he was troubled; although I doubted its efficacy, I gave him and his companions part of the meat also, reserving a leg and the porker for our own consumption.

This idea of the flesh and blood of swine being medicinal is, I have since found, common in Abyssinia. The only cause I can suggest for its origin is, that possibly some of the natives may have seen Europeans in former times using the lard for making mercurial ointment; and thus getting hold of the wrong end of the story, they may have imagined it to have been the medicinal part of the compound.

Towards evening we arrived at a pretty little hamlet called Mai Quollow; the brook from which it takes its name (the Child's Water) flows close by, forming a cascade, not far from the houses, picturesque, but not

at all on a large scale; indeed, I am not aware of any large waterfalls in this part of Africa—even the far-famed cataracts of the Nile are little better than rapids.

Seeing no one about, I sat down under a tree, but had scarcely done so when the chief of the village came out, with his cloth lowered so as to leave his shoulders bare—a sign of the greatest respect and humility—and with more than European politeness upbraided me for not having entered his house at once. He conducted me to his best hut, whence he had ejected his wife and family, and, after seeing me comfortably settled, brought me a goat and some beer; and nothing that I could say would induce him to sit down, or to desist from serving me with his own hands. He had never before seen an European, nor ever heard talk of white men, excepting the Greek silversmiths at Àdoua, so that it could have been from no hope of reward that he behaved thus liberally. Rain coming on towards night, I begged him to return with his family to the hut I occupied, the only waterproof one of the lot; it was with difficulty I induced him to do so, and, even when he did comply, it was with many apologies for the intrusion. Before we went to sleep he got more at ease, after having discussed the greater part of a large jar of beer, and it ended by not only himself, wife, and four children joining me in the hut, but also two donkeys, a lot of goats (which were kind enough to jump on to my couch, and every now and then to run about me in the most frisky manner), and a whole tribe of fowls, a large proportion of which roosted exactly over my head.

CHAPTER XX.

A rough road — Necessity of travelling barefoot — The human form disfigured by confinement — Fertility of the district — A war of wit — Annoyances of the soldiery — Addâro — The secretary-bird — Curiosity of the people — Fate of a party of French travellers.

PART of our next day's journey was disagreeably rough. The road in many places reminded me of the ascent or descent of the pyramids of Gizeh, but was even more difficult, being literally a staircase, formed by enormous blocks of stone, with often a depth of four feet or more between each step. Had I been shod, instead of being barefoot, it would have been scarcely possible for me in many places to have reached the bottom without a fall. It was not till then that I thoroughly understood why the Abyssinians in general never wear shoes, and why those few who have borrowed from their neighbours on the Red Sea the custom of wearing sandals, should only use them in town, and immediately take them off when going on a journey. The fact is, that in a country abounding in rocks as this does, it would be dangerous to attempt to pass many places excepting barefoot; and it is moreover by far the most comfortable way of walking. I went four years barefoot, and must now confess that the compassion I used to feel for a beggar who had no shoes is much diminished, since I have

come to know by experience that it is by far more comfortable to go without them after a very short practice.

In answer to this remark some people have said that it appeared I did not take into consideration the difference of climate, and how terribly persons without shoes must suffer in an English winter. This is the greatest possible mistake; the less confined the foot, the freer the circulation of the blood; and, besides, the foot soon becomes inured to any temperature. I have walked for hours on stones, and even earth, that I could not have borne my hand on for a second, without feeling the heat oppressive to my feet. Oh, what a good law it would be that should forbid the use of shoes or stockings all over the world! We should then bid adieu to corns, chilblains, sore feet from walking, and, of more importance than all, the dangerous consequences of sitting with wet feet. Besides all this, to those who care more about appearance than all the above-named beneficial riddings, I would put this question,—Have any of you ever seen a pretty foot belonging to any one who ever wore a shoe? I say, No. I don't mean to assert that a hard-working nigger's foot is a sample of beauty, any more than the hands of a labouring man in England; but look at an Abyssinian or a Turkish lady's foot! I am not alluding to the little pinched-up things which we vulgarly call pretty feet, because they depend entirely on the shoe for their supposed beauty. They are small, it is true; but if smallness be a desideratum, you need only go to China to be beaten hollow. Take the shoe off, and what remains? A lamentable

deformity. We contend that the Chinese show bad taste in considering that a pair of useless, crippled feet are beautiful, although we at the same time adopt a similar practice, only not to so great an extent.

The shape of our feet is very different from what Nature intended it to be. The great toe, instead of being the longest, should be shorter than, or at most equal to, the one next it. Compare a modern European's feet with those of a statue of one of the ancient masters, and the difference will be at once perceptible. Similar arguments might be used against confining other parts of the body by tight dress, and against the false taste for small waists, which exhibit a most disagreeably abrupt angle at the hip-bone, very different from the line of beauty as described by Hogarth, and preventing European women from ever retaining the beautiful figure which Nature gave them, and which we see so truly drawn by some of the ancient sculptors. Figures like the Hebe or the Venus di Medici are now only to be met with in the East.

It should be mentioned that these last remarks are more the result of conversations I have had on the subject with artists than of my own personal observation. On this account I offer them with more confidence than I should otherwise have done; though, indeed, I can scarcely imagine that any one will differ from them in whose cranium is developed the organ of form, or who has made drawing the human figure a study.

But to return to the road, whence we have sadly diverged. Had I kept my eyes as little to the path as

I have my pen to my subject in the last page, I should have had many an awkward fall, notwithstanding my bare feet. I was at first much astonished at the activity with which the mules and asses hopped up and down some of these places; but they, too, like their masters, and even the horses, are never troubled with shoes. In many places, also, where the road was a little smoother, it was so completely interwoven with thorns that, notwithstanding all my servants' assiduity in running before my mule, some with their swords cutting away the boughs, others warding them off with their shields, I found it impossible to ride. Long before we arrived at our destination I had scarcely a rag left to my back or a square inch of whole skin to my body.

Semema is a fertile district, being watered by a stream of some size, which, running with a considerable fall, is profitably used by the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages for irrigation, its waters being carried over the land at different levels. These artificial aids, little practised elsewhere in Tigrè, cause the naturally fertile soil to produce not only a great quantity, but also all the varieties of the vegetables known in the country.

Close by, on a hill, is the camp, formerly occupied by Lemma, but now by his Belladt Inkata Obsàbius. A number of soldiers were busy washing their clothes at the brook for the coming feast of Mascal. As we passed they could not refrain from giving us many would-be witticisms at our expense. Strange to say, the Abyssinians not only quiz the whites about their colour, but also the blacks; in fact every one who is not of their

own *café-au-lait* mixture. At Howzayn, as I before said, we whites were the object of their satire, while, on this occasion, my dragoman Saïd, who was a black from Kordofan, was politely requested to jump if possible over the stream, lest he should turn it into ink by putting his foot into it. We replied that we should be glad to leap over if possible, as we were inclined to go to church on the feast-day, and that we should be unable to do so if we entered the water polluted by their garments, and so on,—keeping up a dropping fire of *repartie*, even after the distance we were separated from them rendered shouting necessary.

Farther on we met several parties of soldiers joining the camp from Addy Àbo, whither we were bound, and where they had been stationed for some time past. Heartily glad were we to see them leaving the place, for there is no pleasure in living in the same village with them. Not only do they annoy you with their begging visits and other intrusions, but they are also often the cause of reducing you to the borders of starvation; for, from fear of these lawless plunderers, the peasantry will neither bring any produce to the market, nor even sell it in their own houses. Oubi does not permit such conduct when he hears of it; but in these out-of-the-way places Lemma's soldiery, trusting to their distance from him, act nearly as they please. When, however, complaints have reached Oubi's ears, the offenders have been severely punished.

During the day we passed the villages of Addy Abaio and Hamlo, and rather late in the evening arrived

at Mai Sourrou. Near each of these villages flows a stream. That of Hamlo is very beautiful, not only from the abundance of water it contains, but also from the picturesque way in which it winds among the trees and rocks which shadow its bed. At Mai Sourrou we had a warm dispute with the villagers, because it being dark we had mistaken our way and got in among their corn-fields. On arriving at the houses, however, which were at some distance from the scene of our quarrel, we found to our astonishment one of the very men who had been foremost in the matter waiting our arrival at the entrance of the village to conduct us to his own house, he having taken a short cut and arrived before us. He received us with the utmost kindness, and treated us throughout with great hospitality.

Next day, on our way to Addàro, which being very near we hoped to reach early, we were met by a large party, apparently the train of some wealthy man, coming in the opposite direction. On inquiring who he might be, I was informed that he was a Mussulman of the name of Hajji Amàn, a man of great note for his wealth and respectability, and reputed of a most amiable disposition. This character appeared to me so favourable and rare that I thought I could not do better than cultivate his acquaintance. I accordingly rode up to him, and, after the usual interchange of civilities, inquired whither he was going. He replied, "To the camp, on business of importance;" at the same time putting me a similar question. Having answered him, I asked his advice about the best means I could

take for procuring a lodging on my arrival; to which he replied by sending one of his servants back with me, with instructions to prepare one of his houses for me, by turning out the women and donkeys who then occupied it. An hour or two after leaving him we came in sight of the village, which is divided into three portions, each one a short distance from the other. The place was formerly celebrated for its size and the importance of its market; but is now reduced to poverty, and almost deserted. In the neighbourhood are a few pyramidical hills, which present a singular appearance, rising as they do abruptly out of the plain.

Before arriving at the village we had to cross a rather large plain or marsh, with a brook flowing through it. There I saw for the first time the secretary-bird. He is called "Farras Seytan," or the Devil's Horse, from the astonishing swiftness with which he runs: but in this part of Tigrè he goes as commonly by the name of "Selassa Izn," or Thirty Ears, from the crest of feathers with which his head is ornamented. By naturalists this bird is classed among the vultures on account of his bill and claws, which, indeed, considerably resemble those of that family. He is undoubtedly of the Raptores; but as far as I have been able to observe, the extreme difference of his habits from theirs would scarcely allow him to be considered as belonging to the family Vulture. The secretaries live almost entirely on reptiles, which they kill for themselves; while the vultures for the most part feed on carrion.

On arriving at the town all the inhabitants collected

to have a look at me, and even after I was fairly in the house many came peeping in at the door, though they dared not enter, from awe of the great men who were sitting with me. The children especially came running in, and, after taking one hurried but fixed stare, bolted out again, half frightened, half laughing. Many of the people had never seen a white man before, as, with the exception of two French gentlemen, Messrs. Dillon and Petit, who passed through some years ago on their way to the Mareb, no European had ever visited this place. These two gentlemen, both medical men, came here for the sake of natural history, and foolishly, not attending to the advice of the natives, descended to the Mareb at the unhealthy season of the year; that is, immediately after the rains. They remained only eight or nine days, during which time nearly the whole of the party was attacked by the fever. Mr. Dillon died before he had left the place three days on his way back. Several servants shared his fate. Nearly all suffered; though some of the natives and Mr. Petit recovered. His recovery, however, availed him but little: after lying in a state of balance between life and death for more than eleven months, he was, soon after his recovery, carried off by a crocodile in the Abbai or Nile of Gojam—picked out by the voracious animal from the colour of his skin while swimming between two guides. Of the servants who survived, one Bairoo, whose portrait is given in Mr. Lefevre's work, was afterwards in my service. He had never recovered the shock of the fever, being always a sickly, delicate boy.

He died shortly after my leaving the country. Thus, of a party of five Frenchmen who were travelling together, only one (Mr. Lefevre) ever had the good fortune to return to Europe. Mr. Vignon, as I before said, died at Jedda; and Mr. Schœffner, of dysentery, at Antichau.

CHAPTER XXI.

Aito Merratch, Chief of Addy Àbo — Notes of my stay at Addàro — Blessing of a swarm of bees — Visitors — Reputation of Europeans for coining — Welda Georgis — His knowledge of fire-arms — Inducements to remain at Addàro — Start for Rohabaita — A bargain — A long staircase.

DURING my stay at Addàro I was treated with the utmost kindness and civility by the inhabitants, more especially by their chief, Aito Merratch. He is chief of the whole province of Addy Àbo. His father was the same before him, and a very great man in his way, having not only considerable influence in the country from his position, but also on account of his wealth. In these countries, however, rich men rarely thrive; partly because when they become so they turn ambitious, and partly because their wealth renders them objects of envy to others. Thus Oubi, or the Devil, as he himself expressed it, worked the ruin of our worthy friend. His father, Aito Welda Selassy, left him well off; but before he was fourteen years of age he was thrown into prison and despoiled of his property, owing, I believe, to the intrigues of some of his own people, especially one man, whom his father had raised to consideration from the lowest grade. After many years' confinement, Merratch managed to return

to favour, and his government has been lately restored to him, but not his property.

During the remainder of my stay at Addàro my notes partook much of the style of a game-book; nevertheless, I find that, although I expected to meet with every variety of shooting, I was greatly disappointed; the long grass, with which the country remains covered during some months after the rains, entirely prevented my getting near anything worth mentioning in the sporting line. A few guinea-fowl, some antelopes, and a stray boar or two, appear to have been the sum total of my hunting produce. My collection of birds for stuffing went on rather more favourably. Several specimens were added to my list: these, however, did not aid in stocking my larder; and we were frequently reduced to bread and pepper for several days running. As regards other matters I find such remarks as the following:—

"Continually bothered by visitors: really their civility waxeth disagreeable. A party of soldiers still here appear to relieve one another in watching over me; for as fast as one lot goes, another comes to take their place. They are always polite; but it seems to me that their politeness can scarcely be called disinterested, as it mostly ends in their insinuating that a present of some sort or other would be acceptable," &c. And then—"Blessed with a swarm of bees that have lodged in the house. They have stung me several times, but I can bear that, especially as they have also stung some of my importunate visitors, who by this means are kept

away. In fact, the only method I have to rid myself of my friends is to stir up the bees—to rid myself of the bees I am obliged to stir up the fire, which is kept burning all day for the cooking; but by the time the bees are gone the heat is intolerable. Fancy a roaring fire and lots of smoke at noon in one of the hottest places in Abyssinia!"

"Visitors, eternal visitors! Here is a specimen of their usual conversation:—First a good stare, then an unmeaning smile, then 'How do you do?' *An.* 'God be thanked.'—Then, in an under-tone, 'Curious!' Then, *Qu.* 'Is there any rain in your country?' *An.* 'No.'—*Qu.* 'Is there any grass?' *An.* 'No.'—*Qu.* 'Corn.' *An.* 'No.'—*Qu.* 'Are there cattle?' *An.* 'No.'—*Qu.* 'Then what do you eat?' *An.* 'Air.' At this answer they stare a little, and one or two laugh. Some of the wiser, understanding the joke, take it as such; but the others go away persuaded that we have plenty of dollars but no corn, and that, like the sons of Jacob, we are come to their land of plenty for food."

"If I take a walk I am always followed by one or two of the most curious, who come with the pretext of showing me where I shall find game, but in reality to watch my proceedings. They have the idea that I, in common with all of my colour, am possessed of the secret of obtaining or making dollars anywhere by magic. This idea had doubtless its origin in the fact of an Armenian resident in Àdoua having been suspected of coining dollars. Many counterfeit ones are in circulation in the country, and report in the city attributes their

origin to him." I fear too with some truth; for since I left Abyssinia I heard at Khartoum that he had escaped from Cairo and taken refuge in those distant lands to avoid the punishment he was likely to incur, having been detected in the same laudable endeavours to increase the amount of the Egyptian coinage.

From similar reports among the more enlightened inhabitants of the capital the poor country folk and soldiers have probably taken the idea of all Europeans being money-makers in the literal sense of the word; though in the country they have not heard the nightly hammering which the Àdoua people assert appeared to issue from some vault, unknown to any one but its owner, cunningly excavated under the dwelling of Hajji Yohannes; nor are they aware that the dollars thus made are lighter than the genuine ones, and will break if let fall from a height on a stone, though the townsfolk are acquainted with all these particulars. I happened to have a good many new dollars, and whenever I circulated any of them the receiver would sometimes exclaim—"Wa! this is only just made; look, how it shines!"

"I often retire to the neighbouring hills, when about to take an observation, or for some other reason wishing to be undisturbed, and seek out some snug little nook or corner among the rocks. Scarcely, however, have I time to make my preliminary arrangements, when looking up I find two or three heads curiously peering into my retreat, fully persuaded that they are about to behold the entire process of obtaining dollars from the earth,

ready stamped with the august head of her Imperial Majesty. Sometimes they were most laughably disappointed in their expectations.

"If a servant of mine returns from market with an ass laden with corn or other provisions, the people at once say it is dollars, which, having been made by me during the week, I had left hidden in the rocks, and that the servant had been to fetch them. Even while I am writing this there is a large party of warriors in my room—some looking over me. One, especially, an elderly man, is sitting close by me, begging me to write something about him. His name is Welda Georgis. He is naturally very ugly; nor is his appearance at all improved by the want of his nose, which he says he lost in battle. He cannot speak at all without stopping the holes with his fingers, hence his voice, especially when he speaks loud, is, as may be judged, not the most harmonious; and just now he is raising it to a considerable pitch, being excited to wrath by one of his companions insinuating that he was never but in one battle, and that then he ran away before a blow had been struck.

"It may be asked why do I not turn out my visitors when they bother me? I answer, for this plain reason —because I should be vexed if any native were to refuse to indulge my curiosity; and therefore I consider that I have no right to disoblige them. Besides, though turning a man out is a good way of getting rid of him, it is by no means polite (and politeness is much looked to here), nor is it the way to make yourself liked by the people. It is, however, due to the peasantry to

say that they are not very troublesome, the Amhàra soldiers being the real cause of annoyance. But I must leave off writing about them, seeing at this moment the necessity of looking after them, for they are playing dangerous tricks."

Our friend Welda Georgis had got hold of my double-barrelled pistols, and, willing to show off, was retailing to his friends an explanation which I had given him the day before of the manner of cocking and uncocking them. It appears that, anxious to display his knowledge by a practical illustration, he had cocked both barrels, but had made the slight error of pulling the left trigger while he was firmly holding the right hammer. I was disturbed from my writing by a bang, a scream from a woman who was nursing her child and cooking the dinner, and a "Wa!" from Welda Georgis. After a moment's pause he laid the pistol down at a little distance from him, and looking very seriously at it said—"Oh you naughty devil!" Luckily the ball did no harm to any one, only passing through a gourd full of capsicum paste that was hanging up on the other side of the room, and alarming the inhabitants of the next hut by breaking a large corn-jar which stood in their dwelling.

On the evening of October the 2nd I received a present of a hundred heads of Indian corn from Merratch, the chief, accompanied by a polite invitation to come to his hut and get drunk with him. The former I accepted: the latter, with many thanks for his kind attentions, I declined. Next day I called on him to acquaint

him with my intention of leaving Addàro. He expressed himself grieved at my doing so; but his regret abated on my assuring him that I did not intend to leave his province, but only to pass some time in the frontier villages. He represented the dangers and difficulties I was to expect from the Barea, fevers, and even the inhabitants, whom he described as "very good sort of people, but, like most frontier men, rather rough and lawless." I told him that I had heard nearly a similar character of himself and his people before I left Adoua; and that, judging by the agreeable way in which I had been undeceived with regard to them and their country, I could venture to run a similar risk again. Several persons who were also present at the time of my visit united with their chief in endeavouring to dissuade me altogether from leaving them, offering, among other inducements, to build me a house, and marry me to the prettiest girl in the province.

Notwithstanding all these and other temptations, I started the next morning for Rohabaita, accompanied by a guide from Aito Merratch to show me the road and ensure me a kind reception and welcome on my arrival. The distance is not great, not more perhaps than twenty miles; still, encumbered as we were with donkeys, which we had taken instead of porters, and which could not get on, owing to the thorns and stones that obstructed the way, we did not that evening get beyond a village called "Enda Mariam" from the church of St. Mary, which is there. On the road we passed several small villages, and the remains of others.

Among them the principal ones are Tokhulimmy, Addy Nebrit, and Mai Chena. Each of these is, or was, watered by a running stream; though beyond Enda Mariam the villages depend altogether on wells, scooped out by the natives in the sand left after the rains in the dried-up watercourses, and which supply them with good water for the whole of the dry season; yet almost every week as the season advances they are of course obliged to dig deeper and deeper to obtain it.

Mai Chena, when it existed, was so called from its brook. Now the brook only remains. The people becoming poor, and many having fled from the oppression of the soldiers, the remainder were unable to defend themselves against the attacks of the Barea, who frequently visit the neighbourhood in large parties; the place was consequently deserted.

At Enda Mariam I bought half a gallon of excellent honey from the good man of the house where I lodged. The price asked for it was a common flint and steel. I concluded the bargain for the steel alone, as I wanted the flint, and he cared little for it. He was much pleased with the exchange. The steel could certainly not be worth more than a halfpenny at Birmingham, if they could make there anything so common. I bought it at Jedda.

Our next day's journey was but short. The road we passed over was rough, but highly picturesque, and we ended our day's work by climbing a very steep hill, the ascent to which was by means of a sort of semi-natural, semi-artificial staircase of a mile or two

long. Near the top of it, however, we found a pretty little hamlet, called Addy Harisho, where we were hospitably received and comfortably lodged by the lay-dean and chief of the district, Apha-Memher Waddy-Hil.

CHAPTER XXII.

Nine months' stay at Rohabaita — Love of Nature — Crimes of savage and civilized man — Sincerity a virtue of the savage — Description of the province — Productions — The inhabitants — The government of this and a neighbouring district offered me — My plans for governing — Mode of raising a revenue — Account of Aito Gabro Wahed — The Happy Valley — My standing with the natives — I join in their pursuits — Their hatred of the Amhàra — Disappearance of a party of the latter — Waddy Hil, the sub-chief — His former prosperity — Imprisoned for non-payment of Oubi's demands — Released and restored to power — His poverty and generosity — Extreme scarcity of provisions — A supply and visit from Obsàbius — Annual conflagrations — The Barea — A perfect deception — Shifts for food — Benefits of semi-starvation — Ugly wounds and speedy cures.

I COULD almost feel disposed to devote many chapters to my nine months' stay at Rohabaita; but though to me it would be agreeable to dwell on the recollections of the happy hours I passed in that wild spot, I can neither flatter myself that my pen would do justice to the scenes which so much delighted me, nor that, even could description equal the reality, my taste would be in accordance with that of the greater portion of my readers. That a man brought up in the midst of civilization and refinement should presume to look back on the time he passed among savages, without society, without even a book of any sort to refresh his memory, as one of the happiest periods of his life, would to many be equivalent to acknowledging himself possessed of a

coarse and unintellectual mind. The beauties of Nature are little known, still less appreciated, in Europe. Her civilized lovers consider themselves as having enjoyed sufficient of her charms if they have seen a fair view or a beautiful waterfall in Switzerland. To require more than this, at least to enjoy more, would in many cases be deemed blameable. But Nature is not to be truly found in the hackneyed glacier or waterfall, any more than the might of the Pharaohs is to be found in modern Egypt. Relics of her grandeur may be traced in them, and a faint foretaste of the delights of her "culte" gained by their contemplation; like as the tourist, awe-struck by the vastness of the Egyptian monuments, might form some idea of the power of their architects. But as the ancient dynasties of Egypt have yielded to another race, leaving only their traces behind, so has Nature fled from Europe at the approach of civilization; and it is only in her works that she exists there. But it is not in her works only that she is to be admired. To a lover any memento of his mistress must be always agreeable; but would any man consider such souvenirs, sweet though they be, as equivalent to the presence of the donor herself? So it is with Nature: to be fully appreciated she must be known in all her attributes.

> "Oh, she is fairest in her features wild,
> Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her path;"

more especially in those distant backwoods of North and South America and Africa, where probably from the creation to the present day the hand of man has wrought no change, in those lands where man dwells

not, or where at best he dwells in the happy primitive state in which his forefathers lived thousands of years ago. Among the tombs of Upper Egypt may be seen faithfully represented the costumes worn by many of the tribes of Æthiopia of the present day, even to the dressing of the hair, though the hand which drew them has been in the grave for upwards of three thousand years.

Civilization and crime go hand in hand. Among savages theft and murder are common; but they are not the theft and murder of civilization. An European murderer is a man whose naturally vicious disposition makes him to be loathed and dreaded, even by his countrymen. The murderer (to use so harsh a term) in savage countries is often the best and bravest man of his tribe,—a man beloved by all, true to his friends, open-hearted and generous. I may be accused of sophistry in this nice distinction between crime and crime; but no one of my readers will deny that sin consists in the motives by which it is actuated, or that a sin of ignorance is very different from a sin of wilfulness. The savage kills his foeman, perhaps to revenge a kinsman, perhaps instigated by some ancient feud. The Bedouin, brought up to it by national custom, pillages caravans of travellers, and puts to death those who resist. But go to him in his tent, and then you may rest in safety, and partake of the hospitality of the very man who, were he to meet you in the desert, would be the first to attack you. Truly do the sons of Ishmael fulfil the Divine prophecy uttered to their father:—"And he

will be a wild man, and his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Such was it ordained that they should be, and so are they; but who in heart is better than an Arab?

Most justly has Ruxton said, that any one, even the most refined person, who has tasted the sweets of savage life, will always look back with longing to them. Assuredly he will do so. Not that his disposition has acquired a taste for wandering, or that he sighs for liberty to exercise his worse propensities, but as a man who knows how little happiness depends on luxury, and how much it depends on the feeling that what he sees is, and is not merely an appearance,—that his actions will be judged by the motives which actuated them, not by conventionalities,—that his friends will be friends of heart, not of face,—and that his enemies will show their enmity openly before him, not secretly and behind his back. Far be it from me to say that sincerity is unknown or even uncommon in Europe; I only say that there is so much affinity between the tinsel of politeness and the gold of true friendship, that it is difficult for a semi-savage to discriminate between the one and the other.

Rohabaita is a small district or province belonging to the Church, but in some measure dependent on the chief of Addy-Abo. It consists principally of a cluster of hills, bounded on the eastern side by the valley of the Mareb, on the west by Addy-Abo, south by Médevai, and north by the country of the hostile Shangalla.*

* This tribe is erroneously called by the Abyssinians Shangalla or Barea. The first is the name given by them to all the negro slaves on

The villages are built principally near the summits of the hills, from fear of the sudden attacks of their enemies, and of the fatal malaria which at certain seasons of the year prevails in the low valleys. The outline of the country is highly picturesque; though the soil is far from fertile. The slopes of the mountains are unusually steep, and covered with mixed rock and bush, out of which occasionally a huge dima-tree may be seen rearing its head. The valleys between them are narrow, and for the most part terminated at the bottom by watercourses of only a few feet broad, down which in the rainy season pours a torrent, that dries up as soon as the cloudy weather disappears, leaving only a few pools visible; though the inhabitants of the hills always find a supply of water by digging into the sand. This supply would seem to be one of the providences of nature, for in so hot a climate it would be nearly impossible that any quantity of water could be found at so great an elevation if exposed to the influence of the atmosphere. The bottom is rock. Over it the annual torrents have for centuries deposited a coating of sand, now many feet deep, which imbibes and retains a considerable portion of the water that yearly flows over it. The rock below prevents its soaking through; the sand delays its evaporation, and by subjecting it to a process of filtration, before it can enter the hole scraped to receive it, keeps it clear and fresh. A few acres of millet are sometimes cultivated on the

their frontiers, whether from the neighbourhood of Fazogly or the north. Barea merely means slave. The proper name of the country here alluded to is Bàsena: the people are called Bàza.

mountain tops near the villages, but in quantity very insufficient for the wants of the population. The low plains called "Gobo" or "Mazzaga" are therefore employed for this purpose. The former word is the one most used here in the sandy districts; the latter being more commonly applied to the dark-soiled plains of Walkait and Waldabba. Very little "teff" is grown in this neighbourhood, but chiefly millet (mashéla) and "dagousha." The people of Rohabaita are, like most frontier men, rather rough in their ideas and manners, but very hospitable, and given to attach themselves to their friends. I had the good fortune during my long residence to become considered as one of the country, and I was offered the government of Rohabaita and another neighbouring district by Dejatch Lemma. This Prince could not by any means obtain influence over the people of these parts. The inhabitants of Rohabaita, when pressed for taxation, fled across the Mareb with their moveables, and took refuge in Dembelas or Quohain. To do anything in the former of these provinces would require a considerable army to be sent thither, as a few soldiers venturing alone would assuredly be murdered. So greatly indeed were the Amhàra detested, that no one even of our own people dared venture there in the long "callis" trousers worn by the soldiers, but for prudence sake left these behind, and donned the "coumta" or short breeches, or the antelope kilt of a frontier man, as a necessary precaution in visiting these out-of-the-way provinces.

After waiting two years without receiving any supplies or communications from Europe, I began to think

that I should be compelled to remain at any rate for a long period in Abyssinia. So, to be prepared for the worst, I applied to Dejatch Lemma for a government in those parts, offering not only that a regular tribute should be paid him, but also that I would engage to keep in order the hostile Barea, without his putting himself to any inconvenience on their score. He accepted my terms, offering to receive a certain number of guns in lieu of tribute; but the matter was not concluded for some months, as he had to ask his father's consent, and in the mean while, my supplies arriving, I left the country. Notwithstanding that the affair was, both by his wish and my own, kept as secret as possible, it became known to some of the people of the country, and many of those who had fled to the distant provinces came, bringing me presents, and anxiously inquiring when they should be able to return to their former homes.

I had made my plans for governing, as I thought, to perfection. I considered that if once regularly appointed I should feel myself bound to remain till at least I had done some little good to my poor people, and arranged matters for them, so as to leave them in comparative security. Had I received the sum I expected (300*l.*), after having entered upon my government I should have invested a portion of it in ploughs, oxen, and seeds. These I should have lent out to poor peasants, counting 2*l.* for each outfit. One or two good harvests would have enabled them to refund the money, not only for these articles, but also for any provisions

of corn, &c., with which I might have supplied them during the first year. Thus, at the expiration of two years, up to which time I should have required no taxes, they would have been in comfortable circumstances, and able to look forward to a chance of ameliorating their condition. In this way, without much difficulty, and (if properly arranged) with little risk of loss to myself, I should in a short time have mustered a thick and thriving population. For although it would have been contrary to etiquette, and might have brought me into trouble, to have received runaway landholders from other provinces, yet young men, who had not as yet any house or family of their own, might and would have chosen to emigrate and settle in my province, as the place where they would be safest from oppression. My next care would have been that each man able to bear arms should be a soldier, or rather a hunter accustomed to the use of fire-arms. According to the population I should have required annually a body of young men to be provided by a part of the householders in lieu of their taxation. These would not have been idly or unprofitably employed. The levies were to have been made every six months, so as always to have half the number, men of a little experience: the rawest would have been my personal attendants, and employed in learning a few principles of drill, firing at marks, &c.; while the remainder would have been sent out into the backwoods to resist the attacks of the Barea, make forays into their country, and bring home as much profit as they could in ivory and buffalo-hides. The spoils

thus procured would, according to the custom of the country, have been divided between the hunter and myself, as the owner of the guns, ammunition, &c.; and my share would have been amply sufficient to make up for the loss of the tax, which the family of the hunter would have failed to pay me that year, besides that he would also have been in the way of enriching himself. This indeed is one of the best speculations in the "elephant" countries of Abyssinia. A man who has capital enough to invest in a few guns of sufficient calibre, has only to intrust these to men of some respectability and skill in hunting, and he may possibly in a short time obtain a (comparatively speaking) large fortune. Many instances of this have occurred to my knowledge.

I shall hereafter have occasion to speak of one Aito Gabro Wahed, as a rebel chieftain who has made much stir in the politics of this province. Now this Aito* Gabro Wahed was formerly plain "Gabro Wahed, the watta." These wattas are horn-blowers, or general musicians and buffoons, sometimes attached to the courts of the chiefs of Abyssinia, but also frequently (as I believe to have been the case with our hero) itinerant in their habits, making professional tours, something after the manner of our ballad-singers, excepting that the watta usually improvises his songs, according to the treatment he hopes to receive at the hands of the master of the house where he is playing, or relating the story of how he has been treated elsewhere; and in this he will grossly flatter and loudly sing the praises of any

* Aito is a title of distinction or courtesy, like Mr. in English.

one who may have been liberal to him; while at the same moment he will attack with the most slanderous and abusive language any person who may have ill requited his musical efforts. Nor will he confine himself to maltreating the stingy man only, but will also dwell severely on the character and appearance of his wife and family.

Such was Gabro Wahed; as member of a *métier* so professedly mercenary, he was not more esteemed in Abyssinia than he would have been elsewhere. But he had a long head on his shoulders, and, like most men who have led a wandering life, he had learnt how to get on in the world. So one fine day he sold his tooting instruments, and with the aid of some additional savings bought a gun, and entered the service of Aito Welda Selassy, my friend Merratch's father, then chief of Addy-Abo, as a soldier. Having some luck in the chase, he purchased a second gun, which he let out to a poor hunter on the terms I have before mentioned—one-half the produce for him, one-half for his employé. This also answered; and in time, continually increasing the number of his guns and hunters, he became a rich man; and the poor buffoon at last found himself in such a position as to lead him to aspire to his former master's government.

To enter into this sort of speculation would not, of course, be wise in any man who was not either a native of the country or had not some hold upon the men he employed; for it would be hazardous to trust to the honesty of most Abyssinians, especially when, as in this

case, it would be difficult to detect them if they concealed any part of the gain. But for me it might have succeeded; first, because every man in my service would have been merely the representative of some fixed landowner, who was to be responsible for him; and secondly, because I should have sent each party under the direction and surveillance of some experienced and trustworthy officer, who would have had a certain interest in my gains.

For some time my mind was occupied in these and other details. The whole neighbourhood was examined carefully; plans were made for the erection of new villages and their defence; even the site of my own house was fixed upon. Much was thought of, I fear, uselessly; though I may still hope that a few hints may have been collected by my neighbours to their advantage. But all these, interesting though they were to me at the time, would be doubtless tedious to my readers, unacquainted with the locale, and probably for the most part gifted with higher and more refined tastes. I look back upon Rohabaita as a sort of "Happy Valley," with all the necessary enjoyments and none of the drawbacks of the one described by Johnson. But I must not deceive my friends. The climate was wretchedly bad at certain seasons of the year, the accommodation rather inferior to that possessed by our gipsies, and for whole months I have tasted nothing beyond the produce of the chase (*i. e.* game and honey) and a little of the coarse dagousha bread and capsicums. I can remember running in the heat of the

day near two miles up a hill, with the greedy haste of a schoolboy who hears of the arrival of a box of good things from his mamma, feasting my imagination on "galore" of raw onions, which a servant had procured from a neighbouring village. Even milk was very scarce, only one milch cow being found in the neighbourhood, and she left us. In these points was Rohabaita inferior to the Happy Valley. In the innocent, peaceful life which the inhabitants led toward one another they were equal; but it was the esteem and affection in which I am sure I was held by my neighbours, and which I most sincerely reciprocated to them, that I look back upon with the most pleasure. Then again, we were better off than the inmates of the Happy Valley, because we had liberty and plenty of excitement; hunting expeditions, &c. An occasional squabble, in the course of which a few throats were cut (though these were far from agreeable in themselves), came in well as a break to the otherwise too monotonous enjoyment of a tranquil life.

During my whole stay at Rohabaita I was looked upon by the people as a chief, or man of importance among them (be it known we were in a state of semi-rebellion), and consulted on all the most important occasions. I, for my part, felt myself as one of them, and entered with the greatest sympathy and zeal into all their proceedings. At a feast no one enjoyed the dance and song more than I did. I had the most guns discharged at a funeral. No hunting party or foraying expedition but I was in it. I took my turn in

scoutings and outlyings; and I am afraid I must add, that even on one or two occasions, though of course I had no hand in the act, I was privy to the getting rid of a few disagreeable soldiers who came to annoy our peaceful village, and to rob the poor peasantry of what little their predecessors had left them. The truth is, I did not, nor do even now, consider these as other than justifiable homicides. Be it always remembered, the Amhàra are not the lawful rulers of the country; but having conquered it, partly by force, but principally by treachery, they hold it under an iron rod, and pillage the inhabitants to their utmost. The whole of this neighbourhood is, as I before have said, reduced to extreme poverty; and the entire population of Rohabaita at the present day scarcely owns as many cattle as one moderately rich man possessed prior to its oppression.

On one occasion I remember being awakened at midnight by a friend of mine, a hunter, who, owning the only milch cow in the neighbourhood, was in the habit of supplying me with milk. He had come to bid me adieu, as he was going to drive off his cattle, a party of Amhàra having arrived that afternoon at the village. He told me all his plans, and set off accompanied by his two brethren and two other men, all well armed. The soldiers, it would appear, had suspicion of this, for next day a small party of them followed in the direction he had taken; but they never returned, nor were heard of after. If reports are to be believed, they lost their way, or were killed by the Barea or by buffaloes. Pos-

WADDY HIL'S HOUSE.

sibly it may have been so; but I would defy any one to prove the contrary. To have searched for their bodies in the thick jungle of the Mareb would have been nearly as futile as looking for a needle in a truss of hay.

Waddy Hil, the sub-chief and lay dean of the place, who had received me into his house at Merratch's recommendation, was a venerable old man, of a disposition remarkably honourable, and manners peculiarly courteous for an Abyssinian. One trait of his character, which more than any other distinguished him above his fellow-countrymen, was pride. I mean not the species of vanity which is essentially part of the Abyssinian character, but that sort of true pride which prevents a man from acting meanly or dishonestly. His great faults were, that even at his advanced age he could not altogether forego the pleasures of his youth, being remarkable for his fondness of convivial parties, and for the number of fair ladies invited to them. In the days of prosperity he had been very rich and powerful: beside a large body of spearmen, a hundred guns went before him into battle or in processions; and this number of fire-arms is considered as a sign of great power and wealth. His troops, allied with those of Aito Seràphiel of Maitowàro, defeated the army which Dejatch Oubi sent against them, under the command of Dejatch Welda Yessous (Oubi's uncle) and Fit Aurari Gosho. The latter general was carried off the field severely wounded in the leg by a ball from one of Waddy Hil's matchlock-men. A second stronger force, however, overpowered them. Seràphiel was put into

prison, where I believe he remains to this day, and Waddy Hil retired to Rohabaita. On the approach of troops to levy contributions, the people, having concealed their property, fled the country. This, however, he refused to do, and, remaining, was taken, and required to pay the whole amount demanded of his province. Unable to do so at once, he was cast into prison, where he remained several years; but at length, the required sum having been collected by his friends, and representations in his favour having been made to the Government, he was set at liberty and restored to power; but as he has never recovered his property, he has to this day lived in poverty—the pressure of taxation and his natural taste for conviviality often preventing his making both ends meet when pay-day comes on. I received from him the greatest kindness: supplies of all that the country produced were regularly furnished me for a considerable time; and it was not till I had been long acquainted with his family that I discovered that in order to receive me with due hospitality he had himself frequently suffered from want. I was glad on a subsequent occasion to be able to make up to him in some measure for this generous treatment. The Smyrna rug, which had served me for a bed since I left Cairo, was joyfully accepted from him, by his superior chief, as a peace-offering for some defalcation of tribute. We were for a time reduced nearly to starvation. My good host and I shared our provisions to the last grain; but they were scanty. As a final resource I sent to Obsàbius, my old friend the Chief of Maiquollaw, and, telling

him of our distress, begged him to procure us a supply of corn. He sent us immediately what he had in the house as a free gift, and, retaining a servant and the money, till he could procure more on the next market-day, shortly after came down to Rohabaita himself, with two asses laden. Having never before ventured into the country of Barea, fevers, and other dangers, as he called our "Happy Valley," he was rather nervous on his arrival. He had seen and known Waddy Hil in the time of his greatness, and congratulated me on my being in such good hands; he said he was glad to renew the acquaintance of so distinguished a chief, especially as he esteemed him still more now, for the kindness he had shown to his son and father (meaning me); his son, he said, in age, but his father in the respect and affection he bore me. Of course I was obliged to answer with many an "au contraire," expressing how grateful I should be if allowed to call myself his son, and so forth. After many compliments on both sides he gave me a large present of hive honey, which was very acceptable. On his return I accompanied him some distance on the road with a small party of our people, as he had been alarmed when coming by signs of Barea. He said that he and all with him were confident that the blacks were outlying on the road, and that he only escaped molestation from being with a strong party, as he had had the luck to join company with a number of people returning from the markets of Semema and Addàro. Scarcely had we passed the brook of Mai-Chena when one of our men, a hunter,

declared that he saw the slaves. Being at that time inexperienced in such matters, I could see nothing suspicious. He then pointed out to me a dead tree standing on an eminence at a distance of several hundred yards, and charred black by last year's fire. To explain this, I should remark that the rains cause to spring up a thick jungle of grass, canes, and bushes, which cover the whole surface of country, growing to a height of several feet. When this becomes dry it is set fire to,—in some places by the farmers, as the readiest means of clearing the ground; in others by hunters, to enable them to get at their game with greater facility; and often accidentally, by one of these latter dropping a lighted match. These conflagrations generally clear a mile or two, according to the position and quality of the ground; but occasionally, when the wind is fair and the land level and equally overgrown, they continue burning for several days, and sweep enormous tracts of country. However, all that I saw was a charred stump of a tree, and a few blackened logs or stones lying at its feet. The hunter declared that neither the tree nor the stones were there the last time he passed, and that they were simply naked Barea, who had placed themselves in that position to observe us, having no doubt seen us for some time, and prepared themselves. I could scarcely believe it possible that they should remain so motionless, and determined to explore a little: the rest of the party advised me to continue quietly in the road, as it was probable that, from our presenting a rather formidable appearance, we should pass unmolested; but

so confident was I of his mistake, that, telling the rest to go on slowly, as if nothing had been observed, I dropped into the long grass and stalked up towards them. A shot from my rifle, at a long distance (I did not venture too close), acted on the tree and stones as powerfully as the fiddle of Orpheus, but with the contrary effect; for the tree disappeared, and the stones and logs, instead of running after me, ran in the opposite direction. I never was more astonished in my life; for so complete was the deception, that even up to the time I fired I could have declared the objects before me were vegetable or mineral,—anything, indeed, but animal. The fact was, that the cunning rascals who represented stones were lying flat, with their little round shields placed before them as screens. We made the best of our way, lest they should be but a small detachment from a larger body, and arrived in safety at Addàro. Next day we returned to the spot with a large force, and scoured the whole country, but to no purpose, although traces, not only of the enemy's footmarks, but also of their camp fires, were plainly visible in various places.

The supply of food which Obsàbius had brought us was most welcome, for we had been absolutely reduced to parched peas and charity; nay, I might more truly say to the latter only; for although vetches dried and roasted formed at times the principal part of our sustenance, yet we should have been destitute even of these had it not been for the charity of our neighbours. All sorts of witticisms were abroad at the expense of my servants.

Some said that they went out, like monkeys, in troops, to pick berries on the hills, or occasionally rob a few heads of unripe corn from the fields below, part of them feeding, while others kept a sharp look-out, perched up on the high stones. It was, too, just the season of the year when, the fowl being with their eggs and the grass long, I had little chance of much success in the chase; and even if I did bring home a stray guinea-fowl or gazelle, what was it among so many? I should be sorry to relate some of the shifts we were put to, as most people would deprecate my taste on many occasions, while others might think lightly even of my honesty at times.

As a general rule, abstinence does no harm in these climates, but, on the contrary, it is always a good thing, and often necessary. I never felt lighter in my life, or more free from the many ills that vex humanity, than during this my long period of semi-starvation. Wounds of all kinds healed on me like magic, and I never knew what it was to feel lazy or fatigued. On one or two occasions I remember being much astonished at the little I suffered from otherwise ugly wounds about the feet. Once, in running down the stony and almost precipitous path which leads to the Mareb, I struck my bare foot against an edge of rock, which was as sharp as a razor, and a bit of flesh, with the whole of the nail of my left foot little toe, was cut off, leaving only the roots of the nail. This latter I suppose to have been the case, as it has grown all right again. I could not stop longer than to polish off the bit which was hanging by a skin, for we

were in chase of a party of Barea, who had cut the throats of three of Waddy Hil's nephews the night before—(by the way I'll tell that story afterwards, to show what cowardly louts some of the Abyssinians are), —but was obliged to go on running for about twenty miles that afternoon, the greater part of the way up to our ankles in burning sand. Whether this cured it I know not, but I scarcely suffered at all from it next day, and forgot it the day after. Another day I was running after an antelope which I had wounded, and in my eagerness jumped over a bush, and on to the trunk of a fallen tree. Now it so happened that a bough had once stood exactly where my foot now lighted, but, having been broken off, had left a jagged stump, one splinter of which, of about the thickness of a tenpenny nail, entering the ball of my foot, passed so far through that the point appeared like a black spot immediately under the skin, half an inch above the junction of the third and fourth toes, towards the instep, and then broke short off. I got my game, butchered it, and carried it home (some two miles), with the splinter in my foot, which I then drew out with a nail-wrench. A quantity of blood issued from the wound, but, with the exception of a little stiffness for a day or two, which however nowise prevented my walking, I suffered no pain at all. Now, had this occurred to me in Europe, and under a good European diet, I should have been at least a fortnight laid up with a bad foot.

As for thorns in the feet, it may be easily imagined that, in a country where there is scarcely a tree unfur-

nished with these appendages, and some of them of the length of three or four inches, the whole ground must be strewed with them, and, consequently, that the feet of a person going barefoot must frequently act, to all intents and purposes, the part of pincushions; yet I can truly say that, after some time, such is the force of habit and the thickness of skin that one gets by use, I thought no more of picking half-a-dozen thorns out of my feet than an English sportsman would of kicking away the clod of clay he may have accumulated on his shooting-boots in crossing a soft ploughed field.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Course of the Mareb — The Gobo plain — Fount of St. John — Abyssinian hydropathy — Devout patients — Protection of the guardian saint — The Evil Eye — The Mareb at different seasons — Fish abundant — The garmout — Emigrant crocodiles — Abyssinian mode of fishing — A dubious fishing party — Great variety of game — Ornithology.

As I before said, the river Mareb runs at the feet of the mountains on which the villages of Rohabaita stand. I might perhaps have been more easily understood had I undertaken to describe the course of the river itself, and stated that after passing Goundet (where we crossed it on our way to Àdoua) and Aderbàti it is walled in on the one side by the hills of Medevai and Rohabaita, and on the other by those of Quohain, Serawi, &c. Before arriving, however, at the point we are describing, it leaves for a time its north-westerly course and makes a short but abrupt turn to the westward. Opposite to Rohabaita it resumes its former direction.

I have perhaps rather injudiciously chosen the expression of "walled in." In some measure it is so, for applying the term Mareb, as it is used by the natives, not only to the river itself, but also to the belt of low land through which in most parts of its course it flows, I could not convey more accurately an idea of the abruptness of the hills which rise from it.

From our village a very steep and rugged path, scarcely marked among the stones and briers through which it passes, brings you, after near an hour's hopping and scrambling, to the "Gobo." This is a large plain of several thousand acres, surrounded on three sides by hills, and on the fourth descending towards the river. Though from its position rather wanting in air, and rather too hot, it is a beautiful spot, and one where, for many reasons, I passed a great portion of my time. My chief reason was, that there I found a great variety of birds and other animals for my collection. Excepting at the sowing time and harvest not a human being comes to visit it, unless it be a few hunters occasionally passing on their way to the Mareb. Some two or three hundred acres of barely cleared ground have been selected for cultivation; the remainder is a wild jungle, principally of the various kinds of mimosas. The buffalo and elephant frequently visit the place; antelopes of several varieties may be seen at times, though nowhere in these parts are they to be met with in the abundance in which they are said to be found in Southern Africa. The trees are filled with birds. The beautiful sunbirds and others flit about the sweet-scented blossoms of the mimosa; while parrots and the long-tailed parroquets, whistling, pass in flights from one large tree to another in the neighbouring clearings. Eagles and hawks of many species come down from the hills in quest of prey, and nearly all the varieties belonging to the low, hot climates of Abyssinia are to be met with. A dried watercourse forms a natural path across the plain, agreeable in some places from

being shaded by overhanging trees, though the deep sand which forms it renders the walking rather heavy.

After crossing the Gobo, a considerable tract of wild undulating ground descends gradually to the sacred fount of St. John. This spring is not only, as I have often found it, very refreshing as a cool, shady spot where a hot or weary hunter may rest awhile and bathe, but is reputed by the natives to possess almost miraculous healing properties. There are many others in Abyssinia which are supposed to have similar virtues, and are accordingly named after some good patron saint. A few of them may probably contain medicinal properties, but, from their want of taste, I should be inclined to suspect that most of them, like St. Ann's Well at Malvern, derive their great virtue from their purity.

The hydropathic system of Vincent Priessnitz, though not understood, is fully practised in these parts. St. John, St. George, or St. anybody else, has, however, it would appear, a prior right to the honour of the discovery of the modern *St. Vincent*. The great causes of the cures effected by St. John's water at Rohabaita are no doubt the same that wrought those wonders which we hear of daily at Gräfenberg, Umberslade, or Malvern. There must be plenty of air, for the bathers live under the trees in the midst of the wild forest. Some exercise they must have undergone to reach the spot, for there is scarce a house within half-a-day's journey, if so near; and they are obliged to walk about to collect fuel, often from some distance, as little is now to be found near at hand. With regard to diet,

they live on very little. For perspiration, the climate is as good as a dry pack; and for good water, both to drink and to bathe in, there is plenty. That many cures are effected is certain; not only from report do I say so, but also from the proofs which I have seen with my own eyes. Before returning home, every patient who has been benefited, hangs on a neighbouring tree the blue silk cord which he has worn round his neck as a sign of his being a Christian; and the bushes all about the well are covered with these tokens of gratitude. I have frequently found persons there: and once I remember having been struck at seeing three very miserable-looking wretches from Serawi stretched under the trees. They told me that they had been there nearly a fortnight, and that their friends visited them every now and then, and brought them supplies. As they were totally unarmed, and apparently in a weak state of health, I inquired if they were not afraid of the Barea or of the wild beasts. To this they most devoutly replied that the patron saint guarded the place and them from all dangers; that the lions were not only heard by them in the immediate neighbourhood, but that they even occasionally came down to drink at the well. In no instance, however, they added, in the memory of man, was any ill known to have happened to one who put his trust in holy St. John. That lions abound in the neighbourhood every one knows, and I have myself tracked them to the spring; so that thus far their story is true, and only confirms me in my opinion that lions, like all other animals, are loth, when unprovoked, to atta

During my stay in Africa I should think that I had lions prowling round me at night on above a hundred different occasions; in fact, in some places, such as the one of which we are now speaking, scarce a night was ever passed in the backwoods without my hearing them close at hand; but they never attacked me, nor, excepting the first few nights, even caused me the slightest alarm or uneasiness.

In many parts of the East, as in Italy, they have great dread of the effects of the evil eye; but the Easterns' imagination does not confine the exercise of this baneful influence to certain persons only: they believe that the look or expression of admiration of almost any one will, unless it be coupled with praise to the Almighty Creator, injure the object which has elicited it. Thus, a mother, far from being gratified with the remark, "What a beautiful child!" being made regarding her infant, would be highly annoyed, unless the speaker were to add, "praised be God;" and children and animals, nay, even boats and houses, are all provided with some striking ornament, whereto the eyes, or rather the feelings, of the passer-by being first attracted, their influence becomes weakened, and the wearer is less subject to injury. A child will wear bright-coloured ribbons or large silver or gold plates hung on his neck; and the favourite charm for houses is a large dried aloe-plant or a stuffed crocodile hung over the doorway. It might appear that the flattering character the poor patients had given me of the protection they received from St. John had rather weakened its virtue, for, some

time after, happening to pass by, I was attracted by a foul smell to a spot where I found the vultures congregated over the body of an unfortunate wretch whom the Barea had murdered there.

The fountain is situated in a dingle, and overshadowed by large trees. A considerable stream of water is collected by a hollowed trunk laid in it as a pipe, and falls a few feet into a deepish pool beneath, in which the people bathe. The course of the stream which flows from "Abouna Yohannes" is the way usually chosen by persons going to the Mareb; and though it is not a very easy road, yet it is far more practicable than the thick jungle which borders it on either side. In some places, however, you are obliged to wade up to your middle in mud and water, while in others you are caught fast by the bushes above. After going some distance you ascend from the stream, and find yourself in a clearer tract of country, which by many undulations leads you to the Mareb. I have often shot large antelopes and wild boars in the way between St. John's Well and the Mareb; and the traces of buffaloes and elephants are in general to be seen there in plenty, though the animals themselves are more often found among the canes and jungle of the Mareb below.

Like most of the rivers of this country, the Mareb increases greatly during the rainy weather, and in fact inundates its banks for a considerable distance on either side. At this season of the year, however, it is never visited, partly on account of the fevers wh[illegible]
and partly because it is generally impassabl

the dry season, which is the time for hunting, when the heat and dryness of the atmosphere have dissipated the malaria, or rather removed its causes, the inhabitants of the neighbouring provinces cross over to visit each other and to attend each other's markets. The river then presents a different appearance. No longer a broad muddy torrent sweeps down the valley: a belt of sand, bordered by a thick impassable jungle of canes, marks the limits of its former course, while its waters are reduced to a small clear rivulet, which, in some places, trickles along, in others collects like a bath in some hollow with a rock bottom; or, where the soft sand sucks it up, loses itself altogether for a short distance. In the hollows abundance of fish are often found, which may be caught by tickling them in the crevices of the rocks. One of them, called in Tigrè "ambaza," and in Arabic "garmout," is common and rather curious. It is entirely black, and its fins resemble those of an eel, while from its jaws hang six long strings like a beard. This fish, in some places, attains to a great size. I have seen it in the Nile as large as 80 lbs. or more. It will bury itself in the mud during the dry season. In Khartoum I was rather surprised, after only a few days' rain, to see that a hollow place in my garden, which in the rainy season became a pond, contained a great number of these "garmout," some of near half a pound weight. On inquiring of the natives, they told me that the fish had probably remained alive for several months, during the whole dry season, caked up in the mud, which, after the water leaves it, becomes

in a few days dry and hard like a brick. Unless they had been rained down, there was no other means of accounting for their appearance. The hollow was very large, but entirely unconnected with any other water, and the ground had been sown during the previous months with millet.

I have heard a similar account about the discovery of a crocodile buried in the mud of a dry pool, many miles distant from any water. It was discovered by some soldiers in Upper Nubia, and dug out in the presence of two European medical men, and of Ahmed Pacha, who at that time commanded the army and provinces of Soudan. Many persons in those countries have assured me of the existence of land crocodiles, which were found far from the water; but I should be inclined to think that they were emigrants who in the wet season had strayed inland, and settled in some pool or hole. Not far from the village of Shahagny, near Àdoua, where Mr. Schimper lived before the government of Antichau was given to him, a huge crocodile was killed in a sort of natural well, whence the people of the place drew water. Several sheep had vanished unaccountably, but no one guessed the cause, till, waxing impudent, the monster seized upon a poor little girl who was in the act of filling her pitcher. This well is at a very great distance from any water where crocodiles are supposed to exist. But, in truth, in these countries it is a most dangerous thing to bathe in any deep hole or brook: you are never certain but you may find the berth occupied, and yourself welcomed with a most disagreeably cordial embrace.

The Abyssinians usually fish their small streams by damming them up above and below, and poisoning the water, as I have before described. This, though not a sportsmanlike, is certainly a very profitable way of fishing. I remember once being astonished at the number caught by a body of men whom we saw fishing in the Mareb.

A small party of us from Rohabaita being stationed one day on a rock at a short distance from the stream, as a convenient spot whence we could have a good look-out, both up and down the valley, for signs of anything that might be on the move, whether man or beast, the approach of a considerable number of the former rather startled us, and induced us to keep close and watch their proceedings. As they advanced nearer, however, their appearance led us to believe them to be Abyssinians, instead of Barea, for whom we had mistaken them. They were above thirty in number, and all armed with lances, shields, and knives. To our inquiry they answered that they were from Serawi, and had come down to catch some fish for the market. Our people pretended to believe this story; and so completely did they feign credence that they threw the fishermen off their guard, and in course of conversation drew from them that they had been several days on the river, and that they had known of our being there also, by having seen our traces some distance below. The fact is, that they were no doubt from Dembelas or Tokhoul, possibly followers of the rebel Gabro Wahed, of whom I have spoken, and had come down to pick up

any stragglers they might meet, whether hunters or peasants, crossing between Rohabaita and Serawi. They had doubtless been on our trail for some days; and as for their fishing, it was either for their own food or merely as a blind to lure any one who might see them. During our interview they left all the speaking to one man, the rest keeping aloof, and talking among themselves in an under tone. Though we were only nine, yet all but two of us were armed with guns, and this probably deterred them from manifesting any hostile intentions they might have had towards us. Our suspicions were confirmed by their immediately leaving the upward course they had apparently been taking, and returning downwards in anything but the direction of Serawi; and some days after, on our arrival at the village, we heard that a man coming over from Serawi had been robbed and beaten by a party whose description, both in numbers and appearance, answered to theirs exactly.

Certain of the deeper parts of the river appear to be the favourite drinking-places of the wild beasts, for in the sand near them may be seen the traces of almost every species of animal, from the elephant, lion, and buffalo, to the tiny hoof-prints of the smaller varieties of gazelle; and so numerous that it would appear as if they had been driven down in herds. Trails too of serpents of every size may be seen, from the boa-constrictor to the smallest viper; and from the fine sand near the water's edge may be studied the different forms of feet of the raptorial, natatorial, grallatorial, ial

orders, better than in any book of ornithology. Such a place, at first view, raises high the expectations of the naturalist or sportsman; but the jungle, accessible only through paths trodden in it by the elephant or buffalo, is a cover where the game can lie safe from their attacks. The ornithologist has most chance of success; for in the stream are often found many varieties of water-birds, and the large trees and bushes on the higher ground will furnish him with a good many specimens of the other orders.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Belief in omens — Its effects on a war-party — Scouting — A scout's dress and implements — His enjoyments — Food of St. John the Baptist — Nightly precautions — Lions — Difficulty of getting at them — The rifle's place at night — A party of cowards — Fruitless pursuit — Abyssinians courageous in proportion as they are well fed and clothed — Demoralizing tendency of national slavery — The Barea — Their cunning and agility — Their mode of attack — Easily repulsed by firmness — Their practice when pursued — Anecdotes concerning them — Their mode of passing the night previous to an attack — Rencontres with them — Reflections thereon.

BEFORE starting on any expedition, the Abyssinians, like the ancient Romans, listen for the voice of certain birds; and according to whether their notes are heard on the right hand or on the left, so do they anticipate a prosperous or unfavourable journey. I have known many expeditions for the purposes of war or hunting postponed at the moment when, if undertaken, success seemed nearly certain, simply because a little bird called from the left-hand side at starting. Similarly, many a wife has been kept for several days anxiously expecting her husband, because the bird chose to perch on the right hand; the right-hand omen being propitious for setting out from home, the left for returning. The black and white falcon, called here "gaddy gaddy," is considered a bird of omen in some parts of Tigrè. If this bird fly away at the approach of travellers, the

sign is unfavourable; while, on the contrary, if it remain perched and looking at them, they count upon a most prosperous journey. Hunters on the Mareb follow much the warning of a small bird as to the direction they should take; and I have known parties turn back from pursuing the fresh trail of a herd of buffaloes, and take an opposite direction, merely because its chirp was heard on the wrong side. Once, a party of about thirty Barea having been reported to be in the neighbourhood, a large force collected, perhaps a hundred and fifty men; but after arriving in sight of the enemy the gallant army returned peaceably home, and considered such a course not only justifiable but right, because, when halting to reconnoitre, the omen had been heard on the side favourable to their adversaries. On another occasion I had started on a hunting and foraying expedition, with some fifteen tried and picked men. We had remained a fortnight in the frontier woods, and had seen nothing of the Barea: one day, however, a bird gave us an omen of success, and the night following we discovered their fires on a hill scarce a mile distant from where we lay. Our party was in a moment on the *qui vive:* primings were looked to, edges of knives felt and rubbed on a stone, and each one anticipated the glory he was to gain for himself in butchering a few of the enemy. Some were even so much excited, that they began to strut about and count their deeds of valour, in expectancy of what they would have to do on their return home; and, to use a Yankee expression, the whole felt themselves "half froze for hair," or rather for the still

more cruel trophies which Abyssinians take from their slaughtered enemies. But a night-bird's voice settled the whole business; and instead of waiting, as had been our intention, for a few hours before sunrise to strike the *coup*, we all sneaked off homeward, like so many whipped dogs; for the vainglory of the warriors had oozed out of their finger-ends at this intimation of the beaked augur that their bones would be safest in the bosoms of their family circles. In advancing, signs of the Barea were eagerly sought for; in retreating, so great was the panic caused by the unwitting bird, that we kept the sharpest look-out lest they should come upon us unawares.

There is nothing so agreeably exciting as this sort of expedition, or even as scouting in these countries; though the latter is rather lonely work, especially when, as is often the case, it is undertaken by a single man. Still I have more than once started off on this sort of errand for my own amusement, without even saying where I was going, or indeed without so much as knowing it myself. It is a most independent life. My dress on these occasions consisted of a short kilt of nicely tanned antelope's hide, a piece of coarse cotton cloth wrapped round my waist by day as a belt and used as a covering at night, and a small wild cat's or jackal's skin thrown over the left shoulder. Add to these a kid-skin filled with flour, a little horn of cayenne pepper and salt mixed, and a small piece of thin leather for a bed, and you have all the wardrobe, kitchen, and furniture which an Abyssinian frontier-man thinks necessary

for a fortnight's outlying. A flint and steel, slow match, an awl, nippers for extracting thorns, and arms and ammunition, are of course added: and with such means for procuring comforts, and some luck with his rifle, if a man cannot be happy in a dry climate, I wonder what he would wish for! Even if you have no sport with game, there are always small birds, snakes, fish, lizards, &c., to be had; so that you need never want. Besides, the branches of the dima-tree furnish a kind of fruit, which, though not very solid as food, yet aids much to the flavour of the *cuisine*. It has a large greenish shell (as it may be called): inside of it are a number of seeds, attached to which by fibres is a quantity of yellowish white cakey powder, having a sweetish acid taste, and when mixed with water forming an agreeable beverage, something resembling lemonade. The Abyssinians make a paste of this, mixing it with red pepper and salt, and eat it with the "gogo" bread. When

Fruit of the Dima (*Adansonii Digitata*). Natural length, about 9 inches.

the dima reaches a certain size its trunk almost always becomes hollow; and then it often contains wild honey, which may easily be obtained with the help of a small axe and fire. St. John the Baptist's living on locusts and wild honey is easily understood by any one who has been in these countries. The Abyssinians refuse to eat the locust, and deny that it was the insect which was the Saint's food, asserting that it was the fruit of a tree called by the same name (ambatta). The niggers and inhabitants of Sennaar, however, eat the locusts willingly. I have often tasted them; and though there is nothing disagreeable in their flavour, still I cannot say that they are a particularly delicious food. The natives prepare them by pulling off their legs and wings, and roasting them on an iron dish, like coffee.

The usual spot chosen by a scout for passing the night is on some small hill, which, being a little elevated above the water, places the sleeper, in a measure, out of danger of miasma and of being run over by a herd of buffaloes or elephants. There is a very convenient spot for this purpose not far below Rohabaita: a hollow in the top of the hillock prevents the fire from being seen either by man or beast, and the canes below are often chosen by buffaloes as lodging for the night. Far from keeping up great fires, as a protection from wild beasts, hunters on the Mareb usually make theirs either in a natural hole in the ground, or dig one on purpose, if such should not be found in a convenient spot, and pile boughs of trees all round to prevent the glare from being seen. These precautions are necessary, partly

that the blaze may not keep away the buffalo, and partly lest it should attract the Barea. As for the lions, they almost always prowled about us during the night; but our only prayer was that they might stop near us and not disturb other game. I fancy that the attacks from which travellers have suffered must have been induced by their having animals with them. I remember one night being especially annoyed by lions. We were anxiously waiting for morning to attack a herd of buffaloes that we had watched into some canes not many hundred yards distant. Two lions had been prowling round us for some hours. At last, tired of us, they descended and fell upon our horned neighbours; and we had the mortification of hearing them gallop away with the lions after them. Even if the pursuers had had luck, we might have profited by it; for we should surely have killed a gorged lion next day, besides getting the horns, and perhaps part of the skin, of its victim.

I never killed a lion during all my stay in Africa. I perhaps should have done so, if I had known what a fuss is made about it at home; but in Abyssinia it is not an easy thing to accomplish. In the plain country they are almost unknown. In the "quollas" they are plentiful, but no one knows where to find them in the day-time: in fact, from the nature of the country, to discover them is almost impossible. I never once heard a native hunter of these parts say that he had seen or heard of a lion's den. The opinion of the natives was, that these animals lived during the day among the inaccessible rocks and jungle, but at no fixed place. A

few are killed; but these are either met by accident, or are found sleeping after having gorged themselves on some animal. At night I have often watched for them, but generally without success; and when they did come it was next to impossible to shoot them. Besides, it is an awkward thing for a man armed with only a single rifle of light calibre to take a flying shot at a lion in the dark, especially when he has no one to back him on whose courage or shooting he can rely.

You hear a lion roar in the distance; presently a little nearer; then you start up at hearing a short bark close by; and if there be a fire or moonlight, perhaps you may see a light-coloured object gliding quickly past from one bush to another: before you are sure whether or no you saw anything, it is gone. You sit watching for a moment, rifle in hand, expecting him to appear again, when (how he got there you know not) his roar is heard at a considerable distance off in an opposite direction: and thus you go on for an hour or two, when, getting sleepy, you politely request him to take himself off to a certain warm place, and, returning your rifle between your legs, roll over and go to sleep. Some people may think that this is a queer place for a rifle; but, on the contrary, it is the position of all others wherein utility and comfort are most combined. The butt rests on the arm, and serves as a pillow for the head; the muzzle points between the knees, and the arms encircle the lock and breech; so that, besides having a smooth pillow, the butter from your hair is beneficially employed in toughening the wood, instead

of being lost on a stone, while you are always prepared to start up armed at a moment's notice.

A propos of sleeping on hills. A party of fourteen men once rested for the night on an eminence near the river, and at no great distance from the road between Addy Harisho, where I lived, and Devra Mariam, a village of Serawi, to which they belonged. Early in the morning three of them went down to fetch water, leaving the remainder to prepare the breakfast. After a short time, as they did not return, some of their comrades set out to see what had become of them; and, cautiously advancing, saw a party of nine Barea leaving the spot; so they returned in haste, and told their companions what they conjectured had been the probable fate of their brethren. Now, although the survivors were eleven in number, all armed, and according to their own account (and in these matters Abyssinians always exaggerate) the Barea were inferior to them in numbers by two persons, still they had not the courage to attempt to take vengeance on the murderers, or even to ascertain for certain the fate of their victims, but sneaked away among the grass, and returned homeward to Serawi, bearing the sad news. The three sufferers were connections of my host, and the news was sent across to us with all speed, that we might join the force which was to be raised to pursue the enemy. Accordingly, though we all foresaw that, from so much time having been lost, we had little chance of succeeding in our enterprise, still, disgusted with the cowardice and lethargy of our neighbours of Serawi, we determined to

set them a better example, and immediately started down the river in hopes of cutting off the retreat of the enemy, without heeding the meeting-place which had been assigned to us. But it was of no use: the Barea, after striking a *coup*, are too wise to remain long in the same spot, and being more active, and quite as well acquainted with the country as the Abyssinians, they had no doubt arrived near their own frontier long before we even started in pursuit of them. Returning after a hard day's work, we found the people of Serawi dawdling about, taking the bodies to be buried, while some of them had even the impudence to upbraid us for having started without them, and for not having attended the place of meeting agreed upon. A few of our party were desirous of forming a strong force, in order to take revenge for our lost friends, but we could not collect a dozen who would consent to join us: some pleaded that it was better to stay at home and guard their property and families; others, that although that sort of foray would have been well enough in better times, yet now they were a poor and oppressed race, and had therefore more inclination to remain at home and try to make money. It is a well-known fact, that, if you feed an Abyssinian well, and clothe him smartly, he will, as he becomes fat and proud, be not only tolerably courageous, but even often horribly quarrelsome; while frequently, if thin and ragged, he is as meek as a half-weaned lamb. An Abyssinian's courage, indeed, chiefly depends either on personal vanity or interested hopes; there are, of course, many exceptions to this rather too

general rule; and while I speak of them thus severely on this point, I cannot but pity rather than blame them. Before the oppression of the Amhàra they were truly brave; but when a nation is reduced to a state of slavery, it is rare that it does not become demoralized in every way, and the people lose their former energy and that feeling of pride which, after all, is mostly the inducement to great deeds. Until the Tigrè people were subdued they had had for centuries the prestige of victory on their side, and this is always a great encouragement even to brave men: now they have nothing, being scarcely to be considered as a nation, trodden under foot and oppressed as they are by the stranger. The Barea moreover are enemies not at all to be despised even by the bravest. Equal in every respect, as regards cunning and agility, to the Red Indians of North America, they are superior to them in point of stature and physical strength. When they lie out near a road, in wait for passers-by, they will follow a strong party for days, gliding unperceived and noiselessly, like so many snakes in the grass, and waiting till an opportunity occurs when the party, fatigued or hungry, should put aside their weapons, and seek for repose at a halting-place; at other times they will lie concealed near a road, with scouts in every direction on the look-out, yet no one venturing to speak, but only making known by signs what he may have to communicate to his companions or leader. Thus he will point to his ear and foot on hearing footsteps, to his eyes on seeing persons approach, or to his tongue if voices be

audible; and will indicate on his fingers the numbers of those coming, describing also any particulars as to how many porters, beasts of burden or for riding, there may be with the party. This was told me by a man who had been taken prisoner by them, and lived for some time among them.

Their attack is made on a sign from their leader by a volley of stones and clubs being discharged at once on the comers; and before they have recovered from the disagreeable start which this rattle about their ears may have caused them, the Barea rush at them with the fury of so many devils, armed with lance and sword. Their lances are very poor tools, and seldom much esteemed by them for fighting, being more often employed for digging holes in the ground; the formidable two-edged, cross-handled broadsword, used by all the Arabs and Nubians, is their favourite weapon, and one which they generally wield with considerable vigour, if not skill. Like most people acting on the offensive in a bad cause, it has frequently been remarked of these savages that, if their opponents, undismayed by their first attack, stand firm, or advance boldly to meet them, they will retire as fast as they came on; whereas, if the attacked party be taken by surprise, they will most assuredly butcher every man of them. It's no use running away, for they have longer legs than their neighbours, both when pursuing and flying; in their retreats they evince quite as much cunning as in their attacks. As I before said, they are in general both stronger and lighter of foot than the Abyssinians; but

if by chance an old or clumsy Barea should find himself pursued by an Abyssinian, and perceives that his pursuer gains on him, he will first drop his garment, then his lance, then his shield, retaining always to the last his trusty sword. The Barea, in doing this, shows his knowledge of the character of his enemy. An Abyssinian is always most anxious for a trophy, and would never think of passing by anything thus cast away by the foe, lest some one of his comrades should pick it up, and gain the credit which he more deservedly aspired to; so he takes up each successive article as it is thrown down, and in the end the Barea usually succeeds in effecting his escape; for his pursuer not only encumbers himself with what he has to carry, but also, by frequently stopping to collect his trophies, allows the fugitive a considerable advantage. Moreover, to speak the truth, many an Abyssinian would prefer letting a Barea get away to forcing him to stand and fight for his life.

Once a party were returning to Rohabaita, having been to the market of Addàro, when coming to the halting-place they cautiously examined the whole neighbourhood, and, satisfied that no danger was near them, prepared to take their meal and repose; but the Barea, more cunning than they, had concealed themselves so well that they remained undiscovered, although at no great distance from the spot where the Abyssinians were lying. Many of the latter were fatigued from having carried large packs, and the others were equally so from running about after the laden asses, which is no easy task, as the packs get displaced, and the animals gene-

rally manage to stray out of the road in the most awkward places. Having filled their stomachs, the whole party was getting comfortably drowsy, when up got the Barea, and at the first onset killed several of the sleepers; the remainder, however, were it appears rather better men than their brethren of the present day, for they started up and fought so bravely that, after killing many of their assailants, they put the others to flight. This happened many years ago. One of the survivors of the party, now an old man, was my informant; he himself killed two on that occasion, one of whom, from his person and shield being ornamented with strings of beads, was probably a man of consideration. He told me this story at the time the men refused to join us in the retaliatory expedition we had proposed, as a proof that in his day the men were of a different stamp from those of the present generation. "In those days," said he, "we were men; now we have scarcely any among us who even can pluck up courage to defend the women if they be attacked; and how can you expect such cowards to join in any expedition of danger?"

The Barea will not attack a party that shows a bold face. One day I was going to Addàro, with five of my servants armed, and a grass-cutter, quite a boy. We were joined by two peasants, who were driving donkeys laden with millet. Of our party, two of my servants had guns, more indeed for show than for use, as one of them scarcely knew even how to load his: the others had spears and shields. The two peasants were also armed, each with a lance and a small shield. My boy

carried my rifle, and I had a knife and pistols. So we were in all nine persons; and though not quite strong enough to venture on attacking a superior enemy, should we meet one, yet quite sufficiently so to defend ourselves. We had passed Enda-Mariam, and were on our way to Mai-Chena (a brook notorious as a lurking-place of the blacks), when we were met by three boys who were running homeward apparently in a great fright, and who on coming up with us advised us not to proceed any farther, as they had, from the top of a hill, observed a large party of Barea coming in the direction of the ford. Believing that their fears had deceived them, or that they were trying to hoax us, we discredited their story and continued our way, thinking very little, after a few minutes, either of them or the Barea, till on arriving near the water a fresh print of a foot was pronounced by a native to be that of one of the enemy. The others of the party agreeing with him in opinion, we entered into a hurried consultation as to what course it was most expedient to pursue. It was evident that if the Barea were in Mai-Chena they could not be more than a few yards distant from us, and that, having seen us, we had no chance of escaping by flight—a course which was indeed proposed by only two of the party, and their vote was instantly negatived; so, forming ourselves into a sort of triangle, we determined, if opposed, to clear the way for ourselves. One of the two peasants was an elephant-hunter, and took a gun from one of my servants, who knew better the use of the lance; and so we advanced really in good style, singing,

and looking as plucky as we conveniently could under the circumstances. Arrived at the brook, we found indubitable proofs of their neighbourhood—leaves and grass which they had put on stones to sit upon, a broken gourd, and a great number of foot-prints in the sand, which the water was even yet gradually filling. They had evidently seen our approach, and had doubtless taken up a snug position, either for an attack or to defend themselves. The road for a short distance ran among mounds and bushes, out of which we expected every moment to see an enemy spring, or at least to receive a hostile missile of some kind; but, except an occasional rustle, nothing occurred till we got into clear country. Arrived there, we felt our courage wax something awful. We halted, and consulted whether we might not do a little in the glory-gaining line by going into the jungle again, and striking for a trophy or two; but this was objected to by the wiser of the party, as our fire-arms would then give us no advantage over them, since it would be necessarily all close-quarter work, and because they would see us, while we should probably not see them. So we contented ourselves with standing on a rise and hallooing at them, calling them all the names our imaginations could suggest, in a language which of course they could not understand; and my grass-cutter, a boy of fourteen, and so slight that I doubt if he could have killed a rat, grew so bloodthirsty that he was obliged to give vent to his otherwise overboiling feelings by picking up a small pebble, and casting it manfully in the direction in which the enemy were

supposed to lie hidden. None of the men who were with me, excepting the two peasants, were natives of this part of the country, and to this I attribute in a great measure their unusually brave conduct—while the prudent conduct of our enemies may be attributed to our wearing the rather smart costume of soldiers on this occasion (we were going on a visit to Merratch, and were attired in our best toggery), and to the difference between the long spears, broad shields, and red morocco sheathed swords of our party, and the trumpery arms which they had been accustomed to see carried by the people of the country.

During my stay we were frequently annoyed by the incursions of the Barea. Shortly after my first arrival the districts of Zagger and Asgaddy lost a number of men; and in our own immediate neighbourhood a village of Tokhulimny, in which parish I was then residing, was one night attacked, and four persons were killed and three taken prisoners. The most amusing thing I ever heard of was their walking off with two elderly gentlemen, one a petty chief of a village in Rohabaita, only two miles from Addy Harisho, and rather a great man in his way, especially in his own opinion. By the way, this happened before the case I have just mentioned. It was on the very day that I was changing quarters for a month or two, and going to Tokhulimny on a visit. I was just taking a sort of stirrup-cup with the old chief Waddy Hil, my mule standing saddled outside the hut, and my men waiting, when I heard a loud wail from a distance.

I called his attention to it, and we went out; and after a moment's pause, the cry, "The slaves are at Addy 'Khawk'hat," was distinctly heard from a neighbouring hill. This was a most disagreeable piece of news for all parties. Most of our villagers had relatives there; and as the messenger could give us no particulars from the distance at which he called, the worst apprehensions were immediately formed. The women began to wail and lament with loud cries. The men set about to prepare their weapons with a bustle which appeared to me more like the confusion of fright than eagerness for the fray. We were truly in an unpleasant situation: the enemy might choose to come and pay us a visit also. Their having ventured to attack a village in broad daylight, proved that the party was a strong one, whereas we were able to muster only about twenty men from the village and neighbourhood, the rest being in the fields or otherwise engaged at a distance. Such as we were, however, we started for the supposed scene of bloodshed, leaving only the old men and boys to take care of the women; and after crossing about the most fatiguingly rough piece of country imaginable, arrived at the foot of the hill on which the village is situated. Even while yet below, the yells of the women were distinctly audible, and made us hurry on, fancying that the slaughter was still proceeding; but when we reached the summit we found that the place had not actually been attacked, but that Goetàna Aito Welda Selassy, the chief, and Goetàna Aito Somebody Else, both highly respectable gentlemen, happening to be out for

a morning's walk towards their cotton-fields, had accidentally put their feet into the midst of a band of Barea, who had walked them off as prisoners, if they had not murdered them. The former, however, was the opinion most generally entertained. It was painful to hear the poor wives and children of the missing worthies bewailing them as dead. Truly were they widowed and bereaved, though their husbands or fathers were possibly alive. I could not help pitying them: still I had to fight hard with myself in order to repress a smile which kept coming up just when it was least wanted, at the notion of the great, the worthy, the pompous Aito Welda Selassy's possible fate. A man of his dignity to be sold to the Arabs, thence to the Turks, and made in all probability to perform the most menial household offices, was such a truly ludicrous reverse of fortune. This is all very well on paper; but feelings of pity actuated us more than even those of mirth on the occasion, and so we set out to join the other villagers who were already on the trail of the enemy. We passed the spot where the Barea had lain the night before, and found that they were a hundred and seventy-two strong. This we knew by counting the number of fire-holes they had made. The cunning varlets come during the night near the place they intend to attack, and then, halting in some snug position, each man digs a hole for himself. In this he lights a fire, which he keeps going by occasionally fanning it with his shield, and over which he squats, keeping his cloth spread all round him to

prevent the glare from being seen. Thus every man is warm; and there is no danger of their being discovered, which there would be if large fires were allowed to be lighted. A few spies are generally sent out during the night; but attacks are seldom made till about two hours before sunrise, just when the morning air breathes chilly, and men cuddle themselves up and sleep soundest.

It would appear that on the present occasion they had formed a false estimate of the strength of the village, or that its lofty position deterred them from attacking it; and so, having passed the night fruitlessly, they determined to lie in wait and pick up some stragglers. We pursued them for two days, and then returned to our homes. I never saw such an amount of valour as that displayed by the way. It was really quite wonderful. One man was to take two trophies, another three; none talked of prisoners, all were so very bloodthirsty. I look back on that day with a feeling of pride. I felt as brave as any one: in fact, we all felt gloriously brave. But, to tell the truth, we none of us thought it at all probable, or even possible, that we should come up with our chase, or really I don't know whether we should have been quite so gloriously disposed. Once or twice, when one of the party fancied he saw something ahead, I remarked that we all became rather more mercifully inclined; but the thirst for blood and glory returned as soon as the supposed Barea proved to be inanimate objects.

Thus much for our unsuccessful affairs with these fellows. I wish I had some fine story to dilate upon

of a desperate fight, wherein I by my valour ("that courage which is an essential part of the character of every man of our nation"! *) had saved the rest of the party, and where I had done deeds worthy of a Bayard or an Admirable Crichton. Alas! I have none such to tell. The only rencontres which I could relate would in nowise either amuse my readers or reflect credit on any person connected with the victors, being for the most part bloody retaliations, wherein a few men were butchered and mutilated by often ten times their numbers. That they were just retributions there is no doubt; for "he that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." But as for interest, I should hope that few of my countrymen would consider the descriptions of such scenes as more agreeable than would be that of the decapitation of a criminal, or some peculiar mode of butchering animals.

* I quote this out of a book of travels, the author of which (not an Englishman) thus described his own prowess.

CHAPTER XXV.

Abouna Tederos — Magnificent view — Strength of position — St. Theodore's abode — His miracles — Rock water-tank — Abyssinian priests — St. Michael's Eve at Addy Harisho — Religious dance and song — Pugilism — Waddy Hil, his high sense of feeling — Respect shown him — Tropical nights — Curious matrimonial arrangement — The jungle on fire — A predicament — Prompt measures — Serious consequences of the fire — Grandeur of the spectacle — Attempt to blow up a town — The idiot Maghovai — A hunting party — A nocturnal alarm — Buffalo-skin shields — Aito Merratch's mistake and narrow escape — Merit of killing a buffalo — Lame conclusion of the hunt — Departure for Àdoua.

I WAS very near running away from Rohabaita without saying a word about the prettiest spot in the whole province. Winding up still higher among the hills, after an hour's climb from Addy Harisho you reach the little hamlet and church dedicated to Abouna Tederos (St. Theodore), the patron saint of Rohabaita. The village, which consists only of two or three houses, the church, and a long shed or hut used by a few shrivelled monks as a monastery, is built on a large rock, which appears almost to have detached itself from the remainder of the mountain, having communication with it by only one side, which descends gradually, and forms a gully with the slope of the hill behind it. The remaining three faces of the rock fall in abrupt precipices, those of the north and south sides terminating in deep ravines, while that of the east over-

hangs the valley of Mareb. Nothing can exceed the magnificence of the view which this position commands. Imagine yourself standing on the brink of the precipice: a perpendicular rock of about thirty feet is immediately beneath you; while beyond the base of this, the surface is more broken, and interspersed with a few shrubs, and some of the stiff-growing Euphorbia, for a depth of above a hundred feet. Thence, still descending, innumerable masses of stone of every size and shape, and in places overgrown with bushes, form a slope, which, though not so steep, is almost as inaccessible as the former, and extends from the base of the solid cliff till it loses itself among the undulations which form the upper boundaries of the valley of the Mareb. Glancing over the dark green of the uncultivated but fertile valley, through the middle of which the river, as seen from that distance, appears like a winding silver thread, the eye rests for a moment on the mountain of Medevai Tabor rising abruptly to the right, and from its shape, which is square, like a box, forming a strange contrast with the rounded outline of the grey hills of Serawi beyond it. In the extreme distance may be seen those of Simyàta and D'Abba Garima, beyond Àdoua, which in colour appear like faint blue clouds on the horizon, though, from the clearness of the atmosphere, their outline loses none of its distinctness even at so great a distance.

It was here, at St. Theodore's, that I had fixed upon the site where to build my hut, had I remained in the country; and what with its natural position, and a little of the science of fortification which I learnt

in my younger days, I should no doubt have made the place impregnable, at any rate to the most formidable army the Abyssinians or Barea might bring; nay, even, I might say, to cannon; for it would be an arduous undertaking to bring heavy guns up the mountain roads which lead to it. But it is not only for its strength of position and the prospect which it commands that this village is esteemed above most others in the immediate neighbourhood. It received its name from having been the chosen residence of its patron Saint when on earth, and the scene of his principal miracles. On the face of the rock is the little hole wherein he lived; it is barely high enough for a person to squat in; and the marks worn in the stone by the crown of his head, the soles of his feet, and his elbows, are still shown. His miracles were many. Among others, a leopard ate up his son (I hope I am right in giving him a son: I don't know whether his being a father would preclude his being a saint also: however, it was a youth nearly related to him, if I remember the story right). The Saint, returning home, missed him, and set out in search of him. When in the forest he called aloud to him three times, and at the third time the leopard appeared: on seeing him, the Saint guessed how the matter stood with the unfortunate youth; but, nothing discouraged, he coolly ordered the beast to return him safe and sound. Now this was rather difficult, as the leopard had no doubt half digested him: nevertheless, so great was the Saint's power, that the boy left the leopard's maw none

the worse, perhaps rather the better, for having been dismembered and reconstructed. Being asked where a church should be built, the Saint threw his staff, desiring the inquirers to build where they found the staff had fallen. After many days it was found several miles off in Serawi, on the other side of the valley, exactly on the spot where now stands the church of Devra Mariam.

Many other wonderful stories were told me of his feats, but I have forgotten them. The most useful act attributed to him was, that he caused the rock below him to become hollow, in order to receive the rain-water. The hollow still exists, though I should strongly suspect it to be of Nature's construction; or, if the saint had a hand in its design, he must have been a clumsy fellow, for with half the labour he might have made a place capable of containing twice the quantity of water. As it is, however, it fills every year during the rains, and, receiving nearly the whole of what falls on that side the rock, contains sufficient water for the inhabitants during the greater part of the dry season; after which time they dig in the sandy valley at the back of the village. With a very little labour I could have doubled its extent; and then, with a good supply of corn, plenty of water, and the protection of St. Theodore, I would have defied the strongest army of Abyssinia to rout me out of my eyrie: but to this stronghold I should have retreated only in cases of extremity. A few determined riflemen, placed along the defiles, might hold the entire province against invaders: the paths are very

difficult, and out of them it is useless to attempt anything.

The Abyssinian priests are a jolly set. One might fancy that the author of the Ingoldsby Legends had made a stay at St. Theodore's before writing the "Lay of Saint Nicholas."

> "And Peter the prior and Francis the friar
> Sat each with a napkin under his chin:
> But Roger the monk got excessively drunk,
> So they put him to bed, and they tuck'd him in!"

Truly, barring the napkins, putting to bed, and tucking in, which all savour of the European, I could fancy I knew the persons he intended to describe.

I remember how St. Michael's Day was on one occasion passed at Rohabaita. Certain families give feasts on certain saints' days, much after the manner of Catholic countries in Europe. Now it was my host Waddy Hil's custom to "hang out" in honour of St. Michael. Accordingly, for a day or two before his anniversary, all hands were busy in erecting a large "dass," or booth, made of green boughs of trees, close to our compound; and much beer and mead having been prepared, bread baked, and animals got ready for slaughter, on the day appointed the guests arrived, a motley group of priests and scribes, soldiers and women. By the way, a large party was the evening before collected at St. Theodore's church, where they kept it up, praying, dancing, and drinking, till morning, and few retired sober even then. The evening at Addy Harisho was passed nearly in the same manner. I had been out on the Mareb all the

morning, and when I arrived, late in the afternoon, the guests had been some time assembled. On entering, the spoony-sentimental way in which I was welcomed by all the party—men and women coming forward by dozens to embrace me—was at once a proof that they were all very drunk. I went and sat down by Waddy Hil. He said little, but from the peculiarly facetious smile which accompanied whatever he did say, even when discussing the most serious subjects, I soon saw that he was but little better than his neighbours. An old priest came up to me and offered, on the part of himself and his brethren, to perform, if I pleased, the religious dance and song used by them on such occasions. As they seemed anxious to do so, I consented, though verily few of them appeared to be in a state even to walk, much less to dance. I never shall forget their ludicrous efforts to appear graceful, at the same time staggering every step; while the expression of devotion they affected to assume was reduced to a languid smile and thickening eyelids, expressive of nothing but liquor. A hiccup or two occasionally interfered with the solemn words they were chanting; and the stately movements they had begun with, changed gradually to a merry tune, and by degrees the dance became a reel, or rather reeling movement, the words only which accompanied it remaining solemn. At last an old priest (no doubt lost in fervour), suddenly forgetting the original chant, changed its words to those of a jovial drinking ditty: "Don't you stop the liquor, and I will dance for ever!" Instead of the marks of disapprobation which any one

would have expected him to receive from his fellow priests, they only burst into a loud laugh, and, declaring the entertainment to be changed for the better, all with one consent followed his example and his tune.

Shortly after this the amusements were diversified by a most undignified pugilistic encounter between a very short and thick scribe and a long elephant-hunter, a most singular pair for a duel. They were, however, soon separated, and the man of letters, who was the aggressor, was carried home by his friends, as, poor fellow! he could not walk. Not, I believe, that he had suffered much in the fight, for I saw him receive only a few slaps on his reverend cheeks, one of which, though not administered very severely, brought him to the ground. Strange to remark, these occurrences did not at all seem to diminish the respect of the people for their spiritual pastors and masters.

As many of the convives came from a considerable distance, the feast broke up early; but in the course of the evening a few of the immediate neighbours, and some of those who, having come from a distant province, had been invited to pass the night with us, met again in the space between my huts and those of Waddy Hil. Our couches and mats were collected and spread on the ground, and the proceedings of the afternoon were in part recommenced, though in a more orderly way. During our conversation I was much pleased with a trait in the character of my old friend, which showed me that, notwithstanding his weakness for liquor, &c., there existed in his bosom a high sense of

feeling, not often to be met with in his countrymen, and also convinced me that among the people of the country gratitude and attachment to their master are known and felt; a character which I have always assigned to them, and for holding which opinion I have often been ridiculed by other travellers. As I before said, at the time of Waddy Hil's defeat, and of the subsequent occupation of the country by the forces of Oubi, most of the people fled their approach, and escaped with their property to the more distant provinces. Now, several of his soldiery, who no doubt obtained from his generosity, in former times, all they possess, are living in Seràwi and Tokhul, independent, and far richer men than he. From time to time he receives from them presents of various kinds; and on this occasion, several of them being assembled, they appeared anxious to please him by going through the "dum fàter," or war-boast, wherein the followers of a great man claim his favour and esteem for services they have rendered him. This they did, not of course in hopes of receiving any reward, but to raise him as much as possible in the estimation of the company. I observed a shade of melancholy pass over his countenance when the first, a fine tall man, with his hair all tressed, to show that he had been victor in many fights, rising from the ground, stalked into the centre of the circle, and, shaking his shield and brandishing his lance, proudly told how in such a place he had killed Barea, how he had fought and slain two men of the Amhàra, and how, as he had always hitherto served faithfully and devotedly at the command of his

master, he was still ready to follow him wherever he might need his services. The warrior, having bowed to the ground before the chief, retired to his place, and another was about to rise, when the old man stopped him, with a voice half choked with emotion. "My children," said he, "it is true that in better times you followed me, and served me; but now you are my friends and equals, and I thank God that you have in some measure escaped the ills which have befallen me. Why recall the remembrance of those happy days which are passed, and can never return? To raise my pride? That is sufficiently great in seeing that your attachment to me depended not on the remuneration you received from me, but that you continue it, even now, in the days of my misery! Is it, perhaps, as a mark of gratitude to me for what I may have done for you heretofore? Nay, then, you are wrong: the little benefits you may have received at my hands have long since been overpaid by the services you have rendered me. It was on you that all my former greatness depended—you won and held it for me for a long period; nor was it lost by any want of fidelity or courage on your parts. You fought and bled for me; and it was not the foe, but fortune, that overcame us!" The poor old chief stopped here, deeply moved by the recollections which had been brought to his mind; nor were the audience less affected; and for a few moments the mirth of the party was dispelled and a dead silence prevailed. To put a stop to this, at my request the clerical part of the society, who had kept "the pot

a-boiling" since the afternoon, and were become rather more drunk, began to dance and sing and tumble about as before.

Oh! if in England we had the bright, warm moonlight nights of the tropics! Of all things that which I most regret is the enjoyment of sleeping out of doors in those lands where for eight months in the year, not a cloud obscures the sky, and where the moon shines with a light which is of a brightness inferior only to that which it reflects. In Africa, when the moon is near the full, you can read as clearly as by day: and how delightful are the evenings then passed, either round the bivouac's fire in the forest, or near the merry dancing party of the young people in the village!

But to return to my narrative:—After our unsuccessful pursuit of the Barea from Addy 'Khawk'hat, I started for a village about three miles distant from our old quarters at Addàro. The hamlet where we took up our residence consisted only of three compounds, one of which had been ceded to me; but, from the huts being totally out of repair, I had to rebuild them; and the others belonged to the family of Aito Hablo, a farmer, and proprietor of the land. As a rather curious point in the arrangement of matrimonial affairs in this country, I may mention that one of the compounds was occupied by Aito Hablo with a new wife and family, while the other was the dwelling of his cast-off lady and her offspring.

The soil there was of a very different nature and appearance from that of Rohabaita, being highly fertile

and gently undulating; while on the uncultivated parts of it, instead of being covered with rock and jungle, grew long thick grass, the greater part of which during the summer became perfectly dry like hay, leaving only a green strip in the low places near water. This same grass, however, useful as it was — the dry for thatching and the green for provender — became the cause of our being nearly burnt to death, and our houses destroyed. A hunter, either accidentally or mischievously, set fire to the jungle near Addàro. The wind causing it to spread during the night, we were awoke in the morning by the crackling of the flames quite near to us. On rising, we found that the stream of fire had all but encircled the little hill on which our huts were placed. Long before we had time to look about us we were absolutely hemmed in on every side, apparently without a chance of escape; and the fire was mounting the slope gradually. The current of air on each side of the hill had, it appeared, carried it on faster there than on its slopes; besides which, bits of the hill side having been cultivated, and the grass being a little thinner, in consequence of the poorer quality of the soil, it did not progress so fast as on the plain, though still it came on rapidly enough to cause us considerable alarm, as the huts being roofed entirely with sticks and straw, and the grass coming up close to our fences, which were of dry thorns, they were sure of being burnt to the ground unless some prompt measures were determined on to check the progress of the flames. Necessity is the mother of invention; and in much shorter time

than I have taken to write it, large green boughs of trees, which providentially grew close round us, were torn off, and each man of our party, armed with one, made himself useful, working with the energy and determination of men who strive, not for honour and glory, but for life. Part of them, assisted by Hablo's women and children, lit counter-fires all round the village, as the shortest means of clearing a space, and prevented the flames extending farther than was wished by beating them down with the boughs as fast as they acquired too much power. I headed the remainder of the party in an endeavour to retard as much as possible the approach of the great conflagration. Stripped stark naked (with the exception of a bit of skin or leather, which some of the more modest of the party picked up and wrapped round their loins), we made rushes at the flames whenever a lull of the wind allowed us to approach them, and, by beating them with the boughs, in some measure impeded their progress till the space was cleared and the huts were out of danger. Once, however, two of us were sadly near catching it. I and one of my servants happened to rush at the fire at an unlucky moment; for a breeze rising drove the flames towards us just as we got near them, and we were badly scorched. The Abyssinian, poor fellow! was weakly, and what from the burning, and a cold he took from dawdling about after thus heating himself, he was laid up for a long time. I got off better, being only disabled from wearing clothes for a little while, as the skin of my right shoulder and leg came off in blisters, and the

hair of the right side of my head, eyebrow, eyelash, and moustache was singed off. The worst part of my sufferings was the injury of the optic nerve of my right eye, from which I have never recovered, and which has totally spoilt my rifle-shooting—a loss much felt by me, as it was about the only thing in the world I could do well. Formerly I managed occasionally to shoot from my left shoulder—a habit which I found useful in stalking, as in some positions you must necessarily expose yourself before you can bring your right shoulder forward. Now that I am obliged to trust to my left alone, I find it a very poor substitute for the right, and altogether useless for running shots.

This accident, and the loss of a good deal of standing corn, were the amount of our casualties. A hamlet near us suffered considerably more: not only the crops, but several detached houses, were entirely destroyed, and two men and a child lost their lives. The remainder of the village was with difficulty saved; and yet I could not understand how it was they did not run for it, as the flames never entirely surrounded them as they did us; but I fancy they had a much smaller proportion of men to the size of the village than we had, for we mustered very strong — all my servants and several friends luckily being with me at the time.

When the danger was past, and we had time to look about us, the retreat of the flames was a most magnificent sight, almost repaying the danger and trouble they had caused us. Below was the blackened foreground, bounded by a vast line of fire, which marched on like

an army, clearing everything before it—throwing up occasionally, as it were, standards of flame, blue, red, or yellow; while, as if to give effect to the whole by putting it in relief, the smoke caused the sky, naturally too bright, to assume a dark purple hue for some distance above the horizon. I have witnessed many horribly grand spectacles of this nature: of all, I consider this to be the one which partook most of the grand. As for the horrible, I know of none more so than the attempt by a desperado to blow up the whole of a town where I was living at the time, and the population of which, including the garrison, amounted to some thirty or forty thousand souls. This happened about three years after the time of which I am now writing, at Khartoum, the capital of the Egyptian provinces of Soudan. The fellow's design was to fire the central powder magazines, two buildings situated close to each other, and containing several years' supply of ammunition for the use of about thirty thousand troops, in a country perpetually at war. Happily, though near two hundred lives were lost, and several houses brought to the ground, the greater part of the plan failed, as fire burst out of the one magazine on the side farthest from the other, which, though thrown to the ground by the shock, did not ignite. The weakness of the building actually fired also prevented much mischief; for had the powder met with more resistance from well-built solid walls, or from being sunk at all under ground, the shock would have proved tenfold as strong as it did, and the whole town must inevitably have been shaken to the ground.

During my stay at Tokhulimny I made several excursions in the neighbourhood, and did a good deal in the visiting line, having many fashionable acquaintances. Aito Merratch also paid me frequent visits, usually accompanied by an idiot, named Maghovai,—a poor fellow whom he took about with him as an occasional source of amusement. Merratch treated him more kindly than most of the people, and he appeared much attached to him. The boys of the neighbourhood used to plague him terribly; and, though usually quiet, at times he would get very mad and mischievous. I remember his once making a furious charge at my favourite mule, with a lance which he had picked up from one of the people, and he would no doubt have killed her, had he not been disarmed; which indeed was effected with some difficulty. His tongue, however, was more often mischievous than his hands. His usual practice on entering a house, was to go to the women and frighten them till they lent him a water-pipe, with a proper supply of tobacco, fire, &c. When it was all nicely arranged, he would take it, and sitting down for a moment smoke it quietly: then suddenly starting up, either in real or well-assumed rage, deliberately smash it to atoms, and commence insulting and abusing the women most grossly for having offered him so fragile an article. This was what Merratch enjoyed. But his great forte was slandering the character of all the ladies of the neighbourhood. Before Merratch he would particularly abuse the wife of his rival, Gabro Wahed: then he would wander on to the frailties of all the other ladies,

generally making them out to be in love with him, and saying how one praised his eyes, another his teeth, and so on; and, often forgetting himself, he would add the name of Merratch's lady to the list.

Having observed that his paroxysms increased according as he had been baited by the boys or laughed at by the men, I thought that with proper management he might be much improved: so I begged Merratch to let me have him for a while, saying that I would try to cure him. He consented gladly, and I took him. In a short time he grew very fond of me, and could scarcely be induced to leave me. I forbade any one to laugh at him, or to speak to him otherwise than to a sensible person. Even when he made any absurd mistakes in the little jobs I set him to do, I punished severely any of the people who might happen to titter. The first point I gained was to induce him to wear clothes. This I managed by flattering his personal appearance,—a point wherein, like most of his countrymen, he was very susceptible. Then I taught him to hold a gourd for me to wash my hands in; afterwards to accompany me and carry game; till, before leaving me, he became quite steady and tolerably reasonable; and I often, for the sake of trying him, sent him on errands,—as, for example, to change a dollar for cloth. He managed these very well: the only peculiarity he exhibited was that of being absurdly particular, never accepting in exchange a piece of cloth that had a speck of dirt on it. When I returned him to Merratch, he insisted that I had wrought this won-

derful cure in him by means of medicine or charms. I explained to him how it had been done, and begged of him to continue the treatment, pointing out to him the features in the poor fellow's character by working upon which he might be led, namely, by flattering him, by inducing him to believe himself the depositary of great confidence and trust, and by asking his advice and appealing to his good sense in matters of counsel. To Merratch's credit be it said, he no doubt managed the poor fellow as well as, or better than I had done, for a year after Maghovai came to pay me a visit in the place where I then was, and brought with him a small present of bread, the produce of his own cultivation. Though not over bright in his conversation, he was altogether rational. He said that I and Merratch were his father and mother, explaining his simile in a very ingenious but rather Oriental manner, and cried bitterly on my telling him that I was about to leave the country, and that he could not come with me.

Aito Merratch was very civil to me, and did all in his power to render my stay in his province agreeable. One day he got up a hunting party on a large scale for my amusement, or rather I fancy for the sake of my seeing him with "his tail on," as Evan dhu Maccombich would have called it. The meeting-place was the frontier in the direction of Zagger. After a long and tedious journey we arrived at the rendezvous, which was a slight elevation on the borders of a vast plain, covered with small trees and bushes. During the evening and following morning many stragglers arrived, till at last

we mustered about two hundred persons,—a most unsportsmanlike party; in every respect different from what we had been accustomed to on the Mareb. Clean white garments shone in the sun, pretty enough to look at, but very likely to scare away the game. Several rode on mules, with jingling "soulissies" round their necks. Three only were mounted on horseback; eleven had guns; and the rest were armed with lances, swords, and spears. Altogether a more noisy assemblage was never met with. Merratch himself evidently knew about as much of woodcraft as a pig does of navigation; and I foresaw that, though we might have good fun as a picnic party, we should see but little real sport. The day after our arrival was spent in looking out for signs. Many traces of buffalo were lighted upon, and it was determined that we should follow them up next day. Accordingly we had a good supper, and disposed ourselves for passing the night. The people all lay in a circle, the space in the centre of which was occupied by Merratch, myself, Habto Georgis (his chief councillor), and my principal servant Saïd. About midnight a little boy got up and left the camp, either to fetch water or for some other purpose, and on his return was attacked furiously by the dogs (of which a whole tribe had followed us). The cries of the lad and the barking of the dogs awoke the party, who, having before turning in seen the fires of the Barea on the hills opposite to us, immediately concluded that the disturbance was caused by an attack from them. A magnificent scene ensued. The men had laid themselves down, as is usual, with

their weapons near their heads, and their shields for pillows; and now, in the dark and hurry, great confusion took place in the endeavour to find out the rightful owners of these articles. Two men near me got hold of one lance, one having taken it by the shaft, and the other by the head. Unluckily for the fingers of the latter, it happened that the disputed weapon was one of the broad, flat, sharp-edged kind, called "hellas;" and, as both parties pulled furiously, his hands were in consequence sadly lacerated. Seven of the eleven gunners had matchlocks, and they were busy blowing their matches, which at such a moment, with the usual luck of persons in a great hurry, they of course could not induce to ignite. The remainder of the men, having armed themselves, were trying to get up a little courage, by stamping about and screaming out their war-cries. Poor Aito Merratch was completely overcome. Trembling from head to foot, he betook himself to his prayers, —a most comforting resource doubtless in all times of danger and trial, but rather out of place when his example and presence were required for action. I could hear him repeat the Creed (according to the Abyssinian ritual), and a great many other formulæ; but though he continually prayed to spiritually "overthrow the Devil," yet he seemed to have very little inclination to attempt the overthrow of the devils incarnate whom he imagined to be on the point of butchering the whole party. Shortly after, the cause of disturbance being cleared up, things were restored to their former tranquillity, but not until the poor boy had received a good thrashing,

Buffalo Drive.

and one or two of the warriors had vented their rage on several of the faithful dogs by spearing them.

Next day we started to follow the trail, but it was not till the afternoon that we made any encouraging discoveries in the hunting line. About three o'clock, however, a horseman who had been ahead brought us the welcome news that he had seen buffaloes not far off. After some consultation it was arranged that parties with the gunners should station themselves in the different defiles where they were most likely to pass, and the remainder, with the horsemen, endeavour to head them, and drive them towards us. Accordingly I and several others took our position in the most likely place, and awaited their coming with some anxiety. After nearly half an hour's patience, we were on the point of deciding that the project had failed, when a distant sound was heard as of a squadron of horse artillery charging, and presently part of the herd passed close to where we were concealed. Not a lance was thrown by any one of the spearmen; all appeared anxious to get as much out of the way as possible. Out of six guns, the explosion of two huge elephant matchlocks only was heard, for they entirely drowned the paltry crack of an ounce rifle which played them a tenor accompaniment. Two bulls fell; and each of the Abyssinians who had fired rushed forward to claim his. The huge animals were with some difficulty killed, as neither of them had been "dropped cold;" and it was not till this business was over that, to the confusion of one of the would-be successful hunters, I thanked him for the

assistance he had rendered me, and promised him a reward if he would also help me in flaying and cutting up the animal we had just succeeded in mastering. The man stared. I only answered him by pointing to the wound. The ball was soon extracted, and proved to be an ounce of good soft lead, instead of the inch and a half of iron bar with which the Abyssinians load their pieces. The hunter's glory was taken down a peg or two, but he had the good sense to make as pretty a face as possible; and the flaying, butchering, and eating were soon got over. (The greater part was eaten raw.) The meat proved good, the bull being a remarkably fine one. The length of his horns was much above five feet, measuring from point to point, and following the inside curve of them. I was foolish enough to have them sawn up as drinking-horns, and, as I never again procured so fine a specimen of my own shooting, I was obliged to replace their loss by a pair which I afterwards purchased. His skin was cut into four pieces, which were so heavy that when on a long journey a man was required to carry each quarter. I afterwards had them sent to Axum and made into shields; half (that is two shields) were mine, and the other half was the pay of the workman. They turned out first-rate. One of them I gave away, the other I had mounted in silver, and sent it home to England. It was the finest skin of any animal I ever killed, and one of the finest I ever saw. A lion's paw had left a scratch or two on his back and thighs, so deep that they were slightly visible even in the finished shields.

One female was killed by a man in another place. Meanwhile the horsemen, and some of the foot also, continued to pursue the flying herd, which caused the gunners no small annoyance, as it deprived us of all chance of future success. Moreover they did not attempt to attack the full-grown beasts, only aiming at the young ones; and even in this they fatigued themselves almost to no purpose. Our valiant chieftain, Aito Merratch, armed with a lance and an enormous horse-pistol, made a furious onslaught on a small calf which was at a little distance from the rest, being young and weak. Its mother, however, though apparently forgetful of her offspring, was not so in reality, for she had an eye for its safety, which looked backwards, while the other looked forwards for her own; and just as the gallant horseman got near the calf, and was preparing to throw his lance, she wheeled about and made at him with her head down to the ground. The lance fell harmless from his hand, and he turned about too; or rather (as he afterwards assured us) it was his horse that willed it thus, not he. However, he galloped away without even discharging his pistol, for the turn he made was so sudden that he with difficulty kept his seat. Fortunately he managed to stick on; for had he come to the ground the odds would have been rather against his ever getting up again, unless perhaps assisted by the horns of his female assailant.

One man on foot had managed to catch a little calf, only three or four days old, which, when the herd was first started, had run only a few paces, and then stood

quite still. He dragged it on towards the spot where we were standing, in order that his chief might have the glory of killing it. Be it known that the killing of a buffalo counts in Abyssinia as equal in merit to killing twenty men; and on this account almost every great man, and often even his children, can count a good many, as it only requires that they should be the first to wound the animal, however slightly, which they generally do with a gun or a light javelin thrown from a distance; and then it matters little who really kills it, the credit being always attributed to him who first draws blood. On this occasion, however, the glory of slaying the little calf, while it was sucking its captor's thumb, and then boasting as if he had killed a score of warriors, was not destined for Merratch. A soldier, who probably had his laurels yet to gain, and wished to procure them with as little trouble as possible, maddened by the sight of so glorious a chance, rushed up and drove his lance into the unfortunate little victim of human vanity.

Merratch happened to come up shortly after this deed of valour had been performed, and joined with the other man in abusing the soldier, till I feared lest they might serve him as he had treated the animal; but, as is usual with squabbles in this country, it ended in the useless expenditure of a great many hard words.

During the next day we saw some giraffe and elephants at a distance, but failed in our attempts to get near them. A gnu, two of the antelopes here called "tora" (hartebeeste is, I believe, the Cape name), and some smaller game, were all that we killed.

Thus ended the only great hunt I ever saw in Abyssinia; and I may say that it turned out as I anticipated —great fun, but very poor sport. On our return to Addàro most of the party got tipsy at Merratch's expense; and then every man betook himself to his own habitation. I remained in the neighbourhood for some time, and then, by slow degrees, made for Àdoua, remaining a week or two with each of my friends at Mai Quollaw, Aghabsarai, and other places. Nothing out the common occurred during that period, except, perhaps, a few very uninteresting fights about cutting grass, and other absurdities, with the inhabitants of some of the villages we passed, till I arrived at Devra Sina, a mountain near the capital, in some huts near the foot of which I remained till the rainy season set in.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Motives for visiting Addy Àbo—The Bideles—The Barea—Oubi's last campaign against the Barea—Failure of the Apha Negous and other chiefs—Superiority of the Barea as warriors—Adam Chourry—Ali Welda Mariam—Oubi's return.

IN a former chapter I stated the principal motives which led me to turn my footsteps northward, and visit the maligned and little frequented province of Addy Àbo, instead of following the usual but, to my taste, rather hackneyed caravan route to Gondar. I say hackneyed, because from the time of the Portuguese missionaries to the present day every traveller who has visited this part of Æthiopia has taken it as his route and described it in his journal. It will be remembered that one of my motives was to visit, if possible, or at any rate to obtain some information concerning, the people called Shangalla or Barea, whose depredatory incursions on Rohabaita have frequently been mentioned in the last few chapters. I was entirely unable to accomplish the former; and the little that I could glean either of their country or of their habits from the Abyssinians was always very uncertain, and, in many instances, so contradictory and improbable, that I did not think it was worth my while to

make a note of it. Hence the slight sketch that I shall give of them is a sort of mean taken of the few probable circumstances occurring within the wide extremes of the recitals which I heard.

As for my intention of visiting them, I had, as I thought, arranged a very neat plan of passing from Rohabaita, north-eastward, to the semi-independent provinces of Dembelas and Tokhoul, and residing on their frontier till I could make friends with some of the Bideles. These are a people whose country lies to the east of the Barea and north of Dembelas, and who resemble the former in their habits. They are frequently at war with one or both of their neighbours, while at other times they are peaceful, and frequent the markets of both countries.

I should have been delighted if I could have found means of entering their territory, and, after studying their habits, have passed peaceably with their recommendation into that of the Barea. But fate decided it otherwise, for just as all my plans were matured and I was about to set off for the north, they were knocked on the head by Oubi's declaring his intention of attacking "the slaves," and making them pay for the numerous murders and robberies they had of late years perpetrated in his provinces of Addy Àbo, Tsembela, Àsgaddy, and Waldabba. In the last they had pillaged a few monasteries and slaughtered a good number of holy men, and the Church called on Oubi for vengeance. I hoped, however, by means of the "razzia" itself, unsatisfactory though such means always are, to gain some insight into

their manners; yet, at the same time, I anticipated but little, knowing that in all probability the invaders would seldom see anything of the natives excepting when in the act of fighting. And the event proved that my anticipations were better founded than my hopes.

Bàsena, or, as the Abyssinians call it, "Addy Barea," (country of the slaves,) is situated to the north of the kingdom of Tigré. It is bounded on the north by Tàka and the Hallengas, on the west by the colonies of Tokrouri and Arabs who have settled on the Abyssinian frontier, and on the east by the Bidéles, Tsàda Koustan, and other tribes. It may however be considered as naturally bounded in these two latter directions by the rivers Taccazy and Mareb. A considerable tract of uninhabited neutral ground lies between it and the different parts of Abyssinia to which it is contiguous; but more or less intercourse is maintained between its inhabitants and those of the adjacent countries to the north and east.

As regards their mode of government, I could never hear of any supreme monarch, but obtained the names of several chiefs, some of whom ruled over large provinces, while the sway of others was limited to a village or two. For instance, Quodille was named to me as chief "on the Taccazy," and on my inquiring I was given to understand that his government extended for a great distance along the bank of that river; while Fàris had the village of Maidàro, and Ali, Alloumo, both on the Mareb.

From a prisoner taken in the war I learnt the names of some of their towns and villages, and a few more from an Abyssinian who had b[illegible]l by

them and contrived to escape; they amount altogether to thirty in number. But beyond this list and a few other trifles relating to their costume, food, &c., neither of the men was able to assist me much. The Barea, from our ignorance of his language, could not be made to understand anything about distances or the direction of places; and the Abyssinian, when captured, did not know the way he had gone nor that by which he returned, and all he could tell as regarded distances was that he had been taken to a town called Shelfa, whose chief was named Ammou; that he had escaped thence and returned to his home at Amba Abraham (in the southern part of Walkait) in twelve days. I judge from this that the place may have been eight days' journey, or 160 miles, for doubtless he lost a third of the time he took from being obliged to keep out of sight and from ignorance of the road. He told me that he had followed a south-by-westerly direction in his flight.

As for the dress of the Barea, it consists solely of a small cloth wrapped round the body, not more than a third the size of the Abyssinian "quarry;" in fact, nearly resembling that of the poorer Shohos and Arabs of the coast, both in regard to shape and size and the fashion of wearing it.

Their arms are the same as those of their neighbours of Tàka and the Nubian Arabs in general, consisting of a shield, two-edged sword, and spear, with a difference in the shape of the shield, which, instead of being long and pointed at both ends, like those of Sennár, is small and round, with a boss for the hand, like those of the coast tribes.

The swords are of European manufacture, mostly German, and some of very ancient date, though even now-a-days many are made in Europe and sent over to Egypt to be sold to the caravans coming from the different parts of the interior. They are long, broad, and two-edged. There are various patterns of them, some with a single broad groove down the whole length of the blade, others with three small grooves reaching only a few inches, and the remainder plain; others again are perfectly plain, excepting some small device which is rudely engraved on them.

The first of these three patterns is called "Maghreby" or Moorish (literally western), and is usually ornamented with a sun, moon, or stars engraved on the blade. The second is most esteemed, and is called Doukwourry: a lion passant is generally the device of this pattern. They tell in Abyssinia of one taken from the Barea or Sennàris (I forget which) whose point can be bent round in a circle so as to pass the hilt by a good deal; and another is said to be in the possession of the Sultan of Darfur, which he can wind up like the main-spring of a watch, and by means of a catch, keep it in that form till he may require to use it, when, touching a spring, it flies out straight with a sound like a silver bell.* The truth of this story I do not vouch for; I only relate it to show what are considered "points" in a sword by the Barea, Arabs, &c., in contradistinction to the Abyssinians.

The blade of a two-edged sword such as we are de-

* A Toledo blade of nearly as great flexibility was, at the Great Exhibition.

scribing should be about a yard long, three fingers broad, bright without looking new, and as pliant as possible, provided that it return perfectly straight. For such a one the Arabs would give anything, the Abyssinians nothing.

These swords are mounted with cross handles, like those of the Crusaders; and who knows but the fashion may have been introduced into the East by them? The Arabs often ornament them very handsomely with red leather sheaths, stitched with green, and massive silver plates and knobs on the handles, with rings of the same metal for the straps by which they are carried.

These last words require some explanation: the fact is, that this kind of sword is never suspended either by slings or frogs, as with us, nor yet worn buckled to the waist as in Abyssinia, but is carried by means of a single short strap fixed at each extremity to the sword rings, through which the left arm is passed, so that the sword hangs under the arm, either from the shoulder or from the elbow as the wearer chooses, though the former is most usually adopted.

I have seen several of these swords with Arabic and even Æthiopic inscriptions on the blade, and have heard of one belonging to some prince at Gondar which was blessed by the Pope and sent by him to a former Emperor, and which bears an inscription to that effect in Latin as well as in Arabic and Æthiopic. The Abyssinian chiefs had formerly a number of these weapons carried before them in scarlet cloth bags on state occasions; but this custom is now getting to be considered old-fashioned, at any rate in Tigré, where it is seldom practised.

In regard to the religion of the Barea, the Abyssinians, for the most part, assert them to be Pagans. This I have reason for doubting; they practise circumcision, and many of them are called by Mussulman names; hence I should fancy that they are probably in origin half-converted Mohammedans, who know nothing whatever of the tenets of the faith they profess.

They cultivate the dokhon (holcus dockna?) in common with many of the more westerly tribes in the same latitude; the Tigréans, who do not grow this corn, look upon it as a sort of curiosity, and call it "nai Barea dagousha," or the slaves' dagousha. The Abyssinians give very exaggerated accounts of the animal food used by this people, asserting that snakes, rats, and lizards are their favourite meats, but from this I only conclude still more strongly that the Barea do not object to eat many things commonly used by the neighbouring Mohammedan tribes, such as camel's flesh, locusts, &c., but which are looked upon as very unclean by the Abyssinian Christians. In fact, though the Moslem religion interdicts the use of certain animals as food, there are many of the more ignorant tribes of the far south of Nubia who have no scruples about partaking of them.

The Barea are very brave, strong, active, and hardy, and were they a little more civilized, or were they even to unite in any force, would prove very dangerous enemies to Tigré. Still, however, I doubt if civilization, unless carried out to its fullest extent, improves a savage race in any particular. These fellows are, I believe, not only superior to their more civilized neighbours, whether of the north or south, in animal and physical qualities,

but also, from all accounts, are more honest and trustworthy. In regard to any acquaintance with modern improvements in the art of killing their fellow men they are remarkably wanting. For instance, they fear horsemen very much less than foot soldiers, imagining that the former must be old or infirm men who, not being able to keep up with their comrades on foot, require to be carried by horses; while in reality, an Abyssinian who owns a horse must be either a rich man, or a distinguished warrior, whom his chief has rewarded by the gift of one.

So in their campaigns, whenever the Bàza* are met by cavalry they amuse themselves at their expense by facetiously plucking handfuls of grass and holding them towards the horses, and calling them "Tish, Tish, Tish," &c. They appear never able to understand how the fire-arms of their adversaries kill them. Occasionally it has been noticed that when a man has fallen among them by a gun-shot wound, his neighbours will assist him up, imagining him to have stumbled; should life be extinct they manifest their astonishment at finding him dead from some unseen cause; and when on examining his body they discover the small round hole made by the ball, they will stare at it, poke their fingers into it, and absolutely laugh with surprise and wonder. One or two guns have been found amongst them, probably taken from hunters on the Mareb or from some village they may

* I have most frequently used the word Barea to express this people. Bàza is their more proper name, and used by the Arabs and other of their neighbours, probably from their country, "Bàsena." Barea in the Abyssinian languages merely means "slave."

have pillaged, but these were carried as ornaments, for no powder was found with any of them, nor did they appear to consider that at all as a necessary accompaniment to a gun. Notwithstanding all these deficiencies in the art of warfare, one of these savages in general proves more than a match for two ordinary Abyssinians. To sum all up, I should think that the Bàza are in manners and customs not unlike some of the wilder Nubian tribes, only about three or four centuries behind them in civilisation.

I shall now add a short sketch of the last campaign made by Oubi against them.

The prince left his camp at Howzayn in the month of Hedàr or October, 1844, the rainy season being then completely terminated; and, proceeding to Àdoua, encamped on the plains of Maidelàty, distant about a mile and a half from the capital. Here he remained for a fortnight, when he again proceeded northward, and passing by Axum and the Shiré road to Addyàbo, crossed the frontier, and, after some days' march through the uninhabited neutral ground, encamped in the enemy's country to rest his troops. The camp was formed in two divisions, Prince Shétou, Oubi's second son, having pitched his tents a considerable distance ahead of his father. The first movement was made by the Barea, who attacked Shétou's camp; but the enemy being in small numbers, and the Abyssinians on the look out, they were easily beaten off. On this occasion Oubi showed an instance of that superstitious belief in the revelations of seers by which he, in common with almost all his

countrymen, allows himself to be guided, even though it may induce him to act contrary to the dictates of his own judgment or of common sense. Hearing of the attack and its repulse, he immediately sent off a messenger to his son, ordering him on no account to follow up his success by pursuing the enemy, as it had been foretold to him that the day would be unlucky to any one setting out on an expedition. After remaining in the same place for a week, both camps were advanced a few days' journey towards the interior, when a central place having been fixed upon, they pitched again. The object now was to send out parties in various directions to kill, take, burn, destroy, &c., whomever or whatever of the enemy might fall in their way.

One of the first of these parties was headed by several chiefs of distinction, viz., Apha Negous Welda Georgis, Bejerandy Cafty, Aito Baraky, and others. They mustered very strong, and set off in quest of a town or large village of which they had been told the direction. But from ignorance of the country and inability to find water, the supply they carried with them having failed, they suffered sadly from fatigue and thirst, and not only missed their object altogether, but, getting into disorder, divided into two parties, one of which, with much difficulty and the loss of several men missing, managed to return to the camp, while the other was entirely lost, having perished either from want and fatigue, or by the swords of the Barea.

The Apha Negous himself had nearly succumbed to these difficulties, and was for throwing himself on the

ground and remaining to take his chance; but Aito Baraky, who appears to have shown more courage and endurance than any of the rest, assisted and cheered him, and in the end succeeded in getting him home.

On mustering, Welda Georgis' party too was found to have suffered more than any other, numbering on its return scarcely one-fourth of what it did on starting. Oubi was much enraged at the failure of this expedition, and was only prevented by the intercession of his most influential men from administering to the Apha Negous and Bejerandy Cafty a good flogging as a reward for their sufferings in his service.

After this he sent a large force commanded by Remha, son of Welda Selassy, chief of Seloa, and the son of the Aggow chief, Weld Inchaël. They managed better than their precursors, for after a few days' absence they returned to the camp, having destroyed the town and taken a good booty in slaves and cattle. As a proof of the personal superiority of the Barea over the Abyssinians, it is said that Remha was one of the very few men who during the whole war killed a Barea singly in hand-to-hand fight; and this too he managed in a curious manner. Happening to meet one of the enemy, he charged him at full speed, lance in hand, intending doubtless to annihilate him; the savage, however, stepping aside, avoided the blow, and by a dexterous back-stroke of his heavy two-edged blade, hamstrung his horse just as he passed. As a matter of course horse and horseman measured their length on the ground in a most undignified manner, which so

tickled the fancy of the Barea that, instead of finishing his work on his recumbent enemy, he stood by laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks. Remha, however, not being in such a mirthful mood, jumped up and drove his lance right through him, and he fell dead on the ground with the broad grin still on his countenance. Some of the Abyssinians assert disparagingly that individuals of the Barea on more than one occasion, finding that they were outnumbered, threw themselves flat down, hoping either to pass for dead or to lie concealed among the grass, and were easily butchered; but, although such instances really did occur, the parties thus evincing fear were nearly always very young men or boys; while on the other hand, the Abyssinians, if they chose, could relate many more anecdotes, in which it would be seen that their own conduct would in general suffer much if compared with that of their worse armed but braver enemies. For instance, on one occasion in the late war a foraging party from Oubi's camp, numbering seventeen brave Amhára warriors, came upon a single Barea. He was an old man, but from his powerful make, commanding appearance, and the numerous strings of beads with which not only his person but his shield was decorated, was evidently a distinguished war chief, and one whose personal prowess had shown itself by his having come off victor in many fights. This, I should explain, was to be judged by the number of strings of beads he wore, each of which is, or is supposed by the Abyssinians to be, borne in commemoration of some victory over either man or

beast. Well, our brave party surrounded the poor old fellow, expecting that he would endeavour to escape, and that some one of them would find an opportunity of killing him while he was off his guard. But to their disgust and astonishment, instead of showing any symptoms of fear or desperation, he coolly sat down, and taking off one of his sandals (which, unlike the Abyssinians, these people wear), proceeded to sharpen his broadsword on it. The Abyssinians walked off quietly without molesting him; and, in palliation of their cowardice, asserted that the position he occupied gave him great advantage over them, and that they had seen a large party of his people coming up in the distance, who would have reached the spot before they could have mastered him.

Another Barea was similarly surrounded by five or six Amhàra horsemen, but he had *really* got into a position which was unapproachable to mounted men. The Abyssinians did not care to dismount for the assault, but, getting as near as they could with their horses, plied him from that distance with their light javelins; most of these he evaded or caught on his shield; but one, aimed better than the rest, struck him on the foot and wounded him slightly. The former lances he had collected under his arm, but, excited by the smart of the wound, he picked up the offending weapon, and cast it back at its owner, and with such effect that he either killed or wounded him, I forget which. This man, like the other, ended by getting off scot free, and carrying away the bundle of lances as trophies.

There was in Dejatch Shétou's camp a friend of mine called Adam Chourry, the latter name being a "sobriquet" which the loss of his tongue had gained him. The cause of his losing his tongue, or rather the best half of it, was that in former times he had been in the service of Ras Ali, whom he deserted to follow his rival and enemy Oubi, but being of a fickle disposition he got tired of his new master, and returned to the Ras, who welcomed him with a few nights' "durance vile," and then cut off part of his tongue, lest, I suppose, in his wanderings to other chieftains, he should be too free with that organ in reporting Ali's affairs to his neighbours. He can speak, however, though very indistinctly. After the loss of his tongue Ali sent him away to seek his fortune elsewhere, so he next engaged himself with young Dejatch Shétou, with whom he still remains. Shétou is very fond of him, for besides being a tall, handsome fellow, and withal a merry and amusing companion, he is one of the most powerful men in the country. After this introduction I may relate how he killed a Barea whom he chanced to meet. Adam threw a lance at him, but the nigger, after evading it, laid down his sword and shield, and by signs challenged our friend to wrestle. This he doubtless did, seeing Adam to be of unusual size and stature. Our hero gladly accepted the challenge, and, laying down his arms, each advanced to the struggle, which was of considerable duration, but ended by a fall, in which the burly Abyssinian was under. The Barea had a small knife bound on his arm, as is the custom

with all the Nubian tribes. The Abyssinian had none, the custom of his country being not to use knives in any way, not always even for eating. Now, whether the savage refrained from drawing his weapon from motives of honour, or whether from forgetfulness, I know not; nor did he live long enough to tell, for Adam seized his nose with his teeth, and reminded him of the fact of his having a knife, by drawing it for him and cutting his throat with it. Another friend of mine, Ali Welda Mariam, killed two of the Barea; but though Welda Mariam is in reality a brave man and a good soldier, I cannot say that either of these victories was gained in a manner calculated to add at all to the laurels he had already won. One of the two especially gave him much trouble, for the Barea, although wounded in the shoulder at the very first onset, pressed hard on my friend, cutting with his broadsword an enormous gash in his tough buffalo-hide shield; and would, in all probability, have proved too much for him, had not two other Amháras, seeing their comrade's awkward position, galloped up and killed his adversary from behind.

Oubi meanwhile kept gradually advancing, shifting his camp from place to place, and following up the plan he had begun, of sending out parties to ravage the country, though he himself never left the camp. In all he remained nearly two months in the "slave country," which he completely traversed—so completely, indeed, as I believe to have, either intentionally or by mistake, committed some depredations in the border villages of the more northern tribes, which are claimed as tribu-

taries by the Egyptian Government. He returned homewards by the way of the Bidéles and Dembelas, having sent his eldest son, Lemma, two or three days in advance of the main army. Dembelas and the neighbouring province of Tokhoul both nominally belong to Tigré. They are, in fact, inhabited by Tigréens, but, from their remote positions, are nearly independent, and seldom or never pay any tribute, knowing that it would not be worth the prince's while to send an army on purpose against them, and judging that they are of themselves sufficiently powerful to repel any minor invasion. When Lemma reached their country with the vanguard, they began to collect against him, but as soon as the main army appeared, led by Oubi himself, they assumed a more humble attitude, offering him their submission and large presents of honey and other provisions. The army camped for a few days, and then, passing by Quohain, Seràuy, Goundet, and Aderbàty, arrived at Àdoua in the month of Megavìt (February), and pitched in the parish of Enda Mariam, just outside the town.

CHAPTER XXVII.

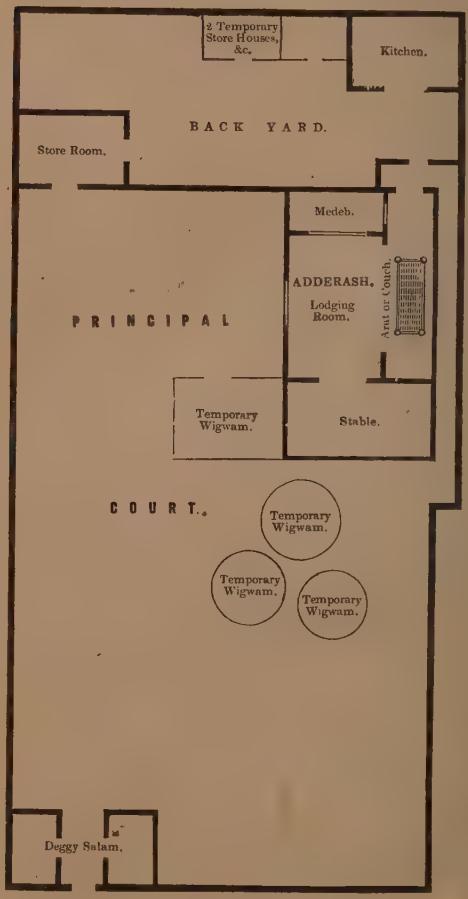
MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

As the following chapters will contain a somewhat detailed account of the manners and customs of the Abyssinians, I must preface it by saying that in the month of June, 1844, after about nine months' absence, I returned to Àdoua, with the intention of passing there the rainy season and the unhealthy period which follows it. Owing to my not receiving the supplies I expected from Europe, I felt it probable that I should be detained a considerable time in Abyssinia. Under these circumstances, I thought that the wisest plan I could adopt was to domesticate myself as much as possible with the natives, the better to study their habits and modes of life. Although I had every opportunity of doing so, I did not exert myself as much as I might have done in noting down all I observed; and my excuse is, that Àdoua is a capital, though a small one; and in all capitals, whether great or small, I feel out of my element, losing at once my health, spirits, and all the little energy and disposition for work I may possess when in the more genial solitude of the backwoods.

I took up my abode at the house of Belladta Sahly, in the Moslem quarter, which I continued to inhabit during the whole of my stay in Àdoua; and I think I cannot do better than commence by giving a description of an Abyssinian dwelling of the better class.

In Àdoua the houses are, of course, of many descriptions, according to the condition of their respective owners. Those of the wealthy are, for the most part, square and flat-roofed, while the habitations of the poorer classes are principally round, and covered in with a conical roof thatched with straw. A description of the one I inhabited will give a tolerably correct idea of those of the former class.

The "Deggy Salâm" is the principal gate, in most houses the only one, by which you enter from the street. It is usually a covered entrance, with a small room on one or both sides, intended for the porter, "Agafàri Deggy Salâm," or other servants. Passing through this gate you enter a large court, about thirty yards square, in the front part of which are constructed one or more "gojjos," or wigwams of straw, for the accommodation of servants or strangers. In the right-hand corner, at the end of the yard farthest from the entrance, is the "adderash," or reception-hall. In the left-hand corner is another building, not so large, usually occupied by the "azzàdge," or house-steward, and which has two doors—one leading into the great court, the other into a smaller one behind. In this building are kept the supplies of provisions—corn, butter, honey, &c. The back court belongs entirely to



PLAN OF MY TOWN-HOUSE, &C., AT ADOUA.

the servants employed in cooking, brewing, &c., and may contain many small buildings, as each servant has his laboratory separate from the others. Thus there is one appropriated to the "tedge melkénia," or brewer of mead, where he brews and afterwards locks up his jars of hydromel, as he is held responsible for it, and would not of course be able to answer for his thirsty fellow-servants' honesty unless his charge were secured under lock and key. There is a separate room for a kitchen, another for storing wood, and another for grinding corn, pepper, &c. These duties, as well as the carrying of water, cooking, and making beer, invariably devolve on the women, while the making of mead is usually a man's office.

The "Adderash."

The "adderash," or reception-hall, is square or oblong; and when, as in my house, it is so large as to render it difficult to find a sufficient number of good beams to reach across it, a plan is adopted which it has often struck me might be advantageously employed under similar circumstances even in Europe. The four corners are cut off by small beams laid across them, leaving an octagonal aperture in the middle, round which is built a wall about four or five feet high; this serves at once to heighten the room and lessen the width to be covered in. On this wall is placed the roof, which consists of boughs of trees laid crosswise over the beams; those of the date-palm, or Arkai (a sort of bamboo), are preferable: the latter especially are sometimes laid very neatly, and have a good appearance, but are little used, from their scarcity, in the mountain country. Some smaller boughs, with their leaves, are laid over these to fill up the crevices between them; and over the whole is spread a layer of earth and shingle, or pebbles, which is trodden, and sometimes sprinkled with water, to render it more solid; but every year it has to be renewed, just before the periodical rains. Wood-ashes are often added, as they are considered useful in rendering the whole water-tight. But the first heavy showers, though useful in settling down the roof and making it solid, increase its weight to such an extent that if the precaution is not taken of laying large flag-like pieces of stone along the top of the wall, immediately under the roof, to shoot off the water, the walls,

built only of rough stones stuck together with mud, would soon dissolve when moistened by the rain, and yield to the superincumbent weight. The flags, however, which are found in the bed of the Assam,* a brook flowing close to Àdoua, not only cover, but project considerably beyond the wall, so as to prevent its being affected by any droppings or soakings from the roof. Notwithstanding these precautions, the fall of houses and enclosure walls is not an uncommon occurrence.

The interior of my dwelling may be considered as in three divisions. 1. The apartment occupied by myself, in which I sleep, eat, and receive my visitors. 2. The stable where my mules are kept, and which opens into my room, there not being even a door to separate us. The mules stand with their heads towards me, and when I am eating *make eyes* at me to throw them bits of bread. 3. The "Médeb," a sort of couch, made of stones and plastered over with mud. I dignify it with the name of couch, though in reality it is nothing more than a part of the floor raised a step higher than the remainder, and extending the whole length of the room, and about five feet broad. This is separated from my apartment by a partition wall, in which is an opening

* I persist in calling this brook Assam, notwithstanding that Dr. Beke (in the Proceedings of R.G.S., vol. xvii. p. 5) is particularly careful in correcting former travellers by saying that it is Hàssam (not Assa nor Assam). During my long stay in Tigré I never heard it so called; but lest I should have been guilty of misplacing my H's, I had the word pronounced three or four times by my Abyssinian servant, now with me in England, and could catch no H. I should as soon call Assam, Hassam, as Hailo, Aylo—a mistake I have seen made in Bruce.

of about eight feet broad. Should the house belong to a married man, this aperture is closed by a curtain drawn across it. The "médeb" is used by the ladies as a withdrawing room; and from behind this curtain they peep at all that goes on in the reception hall upon festive occasions. On entering my apartment the stable is on the right hand, and the "médeb" on the left. In front is the "arat" or couch of the master of the house, placed also in a sort of alcove, like the "médeb," from which a small door passes to the left, opening into a private passage, by which the master can pass unobserved to the "médeb," or can effect his escape by a small door ("helfinia") to the back yard, which he often finds convenient for avoiding disagreeable visitors. The "arat" I have just mentioned is the couch or bed on which all town Abyssinians sleep; that is to say, all those who can afford the luxury. It is a solid framework of wood on four legs. A fresh raw hide is cut into strips, and these are stretched over the frame in and out, one crossing the other about an inch or rather more apart. The whole tightens in drying, and forms a rather hard, but very agreeable, cool bed. It is the custom always to sleep naked, but covered with the quarrie or cotton cloth worn in the daytime; and the only bedding used is a piece of native-tanned leather, so that the air has free access from below. In these hot climates, however, it is more usual to sleep out of doors; the "arat" inside of the house being used for cold or wet weather only, or for receiving visitors in the daytime. The "médeb," in like manner, is covered

with a piece of red leather, unless it happens that some wealthy dame has a carpet of Egyptian or Turkish manufacture. The pillows are mostly of wood, either a square block, about four inches long by three inches broad, a little hollowed on one side for the head; or sometimes very tastefully shaped, the stand being neatly turned like a candlestick bottom. It is about seven or eight inches high, and the part on which the head rests is crescent-shaped. Some of the latter I have seen made of ivory and stained with henna. This form of pillow is very necessary to people who, from the custom of having their hair fancifully tressed and arranged and plastered with butter, could not lay their heads on any ordinary one, as they would saturate it with grease, besides seriously deranging their coiffure: so they use the hollowed wooden pillow, just laying their ear on it, and allowing their hair to hang freely behind. It is rather fatiguing at first to be obliged to keep one's head for a whole night in one position, and that indeed not the most comfortable; but habit reconciles one to almost anything.

The floor of the reception-hall is carpeted with grass, which, in the first instance, is spread nearly half a foot deep all over the room; and afterwards, whenever a visitor comes, a little fresh grass is politely strewed for him to sit on; so that, in course of time, it accumulates to a considerable quantity. Now, this is one of the most disagreeable customs in the country; for, as before and after meals, and on other occasions, the hands of every person in the room are washed by a servant's

pouring water over them out of a drinking-horn, or any other utensil he may have at hand, you are obliged, from the want of a basin to receive the water, to scratch a small hole in the grass to prevent it splashing you. Add to this the beer and other liquids spilt there every day, the manure left by the mules' feet in passing to and from the stable, and the cleaning out of the stable itself, which is done two or three times a-week for the sake of the mules' feet, which would otherwise become softened by remaining in the wet. This last operation makes a great deal of dirt; for, having no buckets, they carry out the manure and filth in any sort of basket, gourd, or dish they can first lay hands on—dropping, of course, a good deal on the way. Thus the beautiful carpet becomes in time nothing less than a manure-heap in a high state of fermentation or putrefaction. Its surface, from the continual supply, keeps an appearance of freshness; but though the eye may be deceived for a time, the nose cannot be; and the smell becoming intolerable, the whole is obliged to be cleaned out. For at least a day after this operation the house must be left to ventilate, otherwise no one could live in it. Dirty as this practice is, we cannot much complain of it in the Abyssinians, as the old English custom of strewing the rooms with rushes entailed consequences that would probably now-a-days seem quite as disgusting.

Around the room cows' horns are fixed to serve as hooks, to which are suspended as ornaments shields, lances, guns, swords, skins, and other trophies of the chase. The shields have holes bored all round the edge,

and the loop by which they are slung is changed occasionally from one to the other of these, especially in damp weather, to prevent the shield's losing its shape. The lances are kept in sheaths called "shiffaf," at the point of which is a loop, by which they are slung. The lances, like the shield, should swing free of the wall to keep them perfectly straight. The wood is frequently greased with butter to render it tough and pliant, and the iron is covered with a coating of suet to prevent its rusting. A great deal of fashion and fancy exists in the form of the lance-heads, and much trouble is taken to procure wood that is pretty in appearance, and at the same time of good quality. Large faggots of the young trees of which they are made are brought from the lower, or "quolla" country. These are burnt till the peel comes off: the wood is then straightened and well dried, which is a very nice operation; for if too much dried it becomes brittle; if more burnt in one part than another it will never keep straight; and if not sufficiently dried it is in equally bad condition. It is next greased, and hung over a fireplace for several months till it assumes a reddish-yellow tint, when it is considered handsome and well seasoned. It is then mounted and kept ready for use. The "Arkai," or "Shimmel," which has been before described as a sort of bamboo, is also used for lances. When a lance gets a little crooked it is usual to suspend it, with a large stone or other weight fastened to its "jàmfo," or butt, in order to straighten it; and I have seen a gun hung up in the same way with a stone to its muzzle. On inquiring of the man why he had

done this, and being answered, "because it shot crooked," I replied, "Had you not better hang a stone to your eye, for perhaps it may see crooked?" Some of my readers who may return from the field with empty bags on the 1st of September may probably like to try this sort of cure for their guns, or their eyes, as the case may be.

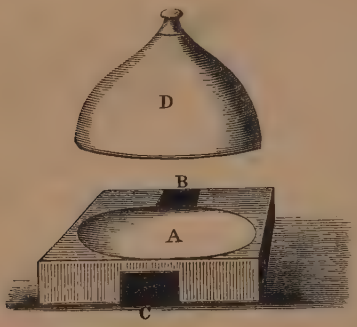
Besides the useful and ornamental articles already mentioned as suspended around the room, are the different horse and mule trappings, and the "wancha," or drinking-horns. The latter are kept in leather cases with a long strap, by which, when in the house, they are suspended to the wall, and, when on a journey, carried round the neck of a boy, to whom this office is assigned. The "médeb" is usually filled with the women's pro-

Kitchen-yard.

perty—boxes for scents, small glass bottles for essential oils, and metal ones for the "kohly," or antimony, &c.

We must now take a survey of the kitchen. Imagine a small room about 10 feet long, 6 broad, and 8 high, with or without a window, according to circumstances, but more usually, as in mine, without one; and at all events, without a chimney; so that the smoke, which is almost always kept going, and that vigorously, finds the door the nearest exit; and it may be easily conceived that the atmosphere is so dense as to render it difficult for any one but a native to remain long in the room. Even the cook-women, who pass the greater part of the day in this smoke, never think of standing up to do their work, but always remain squatted as low as possible, either near the door or fire. Every article the room contains becomes, like the apartment itself, of a pure soot black. The kitchen utensils are the "magogo" or oven (if it may be so called), a few jars of different forms and sizes, according to the use they are intended to be put to—some with long necks and narrow mouths, for carrying and keeping water in; others with wide mouths and no necks at all, for holding the liquid dough of which the bread is formed,—and the earthen dishes or saucers in which the meat and other eatables are prepared and served up. The "magogo" is an oblong building, three feet by four, and about a foot high. It is constructed of clay and small stones, with a space in the interior for a fire. The whole is covered with a circular slab of a sort of pottery work (being nearly the same material as that of which the dishes are formed)

nicely polished on the upper surface (A), which is slightly concave, in order to receive more easily the liquid dough for the bread. At the back is a hole (B) by which the smoke may escape, and in front a sort of doorway (C), by which the fire is lighted, and which, being placed exactly opposite the kitchen door, has always a draught of air between it and B to keep up



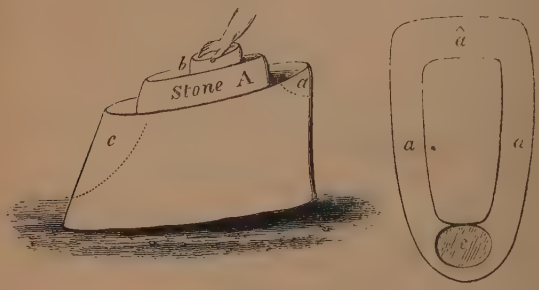
Magogo.

a good fire. D is the cover, made of clay: it fits exactly the circular receptacle (A), and is used to keep out the smoke and dirt, and to retain the heat.

We will now pass into the store-room, where the corn is kept in large mud jars, the tops of which reach nearly to the roof, though their bases are all buried a yard or more in the ground. The principal corn provision of the country consists of wheat (which, however, is rare in some parts), teff, dàgousha, and that sort of millet called in Arabic "doura," and in Abyssinian "mashéla," "léqua," &c., according to its quality. Besides

these, they have the corn which bears so many names in different countries. We call it *Indian* corn. In Italy it is called "gran *Turco*;" in the dialect of Sennaar, "eysh reef" (*Egyptian* millet); in Egypt, "doura shammy" (*Syrian* millet); and the Abyssinians of Tigré call it "mashéla bah-ry," or millet from the sea,—their usual method of distinguishing any foreign importation. This sort of corn, however, is rather scarce in the country, and is mutually exchanged by friends as presents of compliment; just as a hamper of game or a barrel of oysters would be in England. It is seldom ground, being more frequently eaten as a delicacy, roasted on the embers with butter, or boiled like pease. One or two sorts of pease, beans, and vetches are also used in cookery, and sometimes for making bread. The principal corn of the country, however, is "teff" and "dàgousha," if, indeed, we may venture to include these under the head of corn; for they both resemble different sorts of grass, and the seed is not larger than rape or canary seed. Of each of these there are various qualities, esteemed according to their colour—white, red, or black. White "teff" bread is preferred by all natives even to wheat bread. White "dàgousha" is not often grown in the highland districts, being more commonly met with in the lower countries, like "Shiré," &c. All persons who can afford "teff" prefer it for bread, as, except in the "quolla" country, the "dàgousha" is little esteemed or used except for making beer. In fact, it stands in the same position to "teff" in Abyssinia as barley does to

wheat in this country. Before the corn can be used for bread it must be ground; which operation is performed by a very simple and primitive apparatus, consisting merely of two stones,—the "mout-han" or grinding-stone, and the "mudid" or grinder (*b*). The "mout-han" (A) is a piece of hard stone, about two feet long by one foot broad, placed on a foundation composed of small stones mixed with clay, of such a height that the upper edge of the stone is about level with the hip of



Grinding-stone.

the person at work, its surface sloping gradually downwards, so as to allow the flour as it is ground to fall of itself into the hole (*c*), or into the troughs (*aa*), one of which is on each side of the stone, and whence it is swept by the hand into *c*. The corn to be ground is usually placed in the hollow (*â*), and, as fast as the supply already on the stone is ground, a little more is brought up from this receptacle by one hand, while the "mudid," or grinder, is kept in motion by the other. The stones are chosen from the mountains, according to

their quality, and care is taken that they shall be as nearly as possible of a convenient shape; for in these countries they have no proper tools for working stone; and their way of smoothing a grinding-stone is by tapping it with a pebble, which is a long and tedious operation, but ultimately produces a tolerably smooth surface. A good hardworking woman-servant will generally grind from six to eight measures—eight to ten quarts—of "teff" in a day, besides doing her other work. There are several ways of making the flour into bread, according to the taste of the eater, the quality of the corn, and the time and circumstances connected with the baking. For example, we have in a former chapter seen the manner in which travellers who have no time to lose make their "gogo" bread. The ordinary bread is called "taita," or "tabita," and is made of the different kinds of corn I have just named, and sometimes, in the country, of pease and vetches. The flour has first to be well dried on the "magogo," then mixed with water, so as to form a sort of paste or dough of about the consistence of weak gruel. This is put into an earthen jar, and left to stand for a day and night to leaven: it is then ready for baking, which is a very simple process. First, to prevent the bread from adhering to the "magogo," it is rubbed with a seed of an oily quality, called "addra," resembling linseed. This is done after the "magogo" has been well heated by the fire underneath; and when the seed becomes so hot as to emit a gas, it is ignited, and with a bit of rag rubbed over the surface of the "magogo." Of the "gruel" or liquid

dough a sufficient quantity to make one cake is then poured on the oven, and with the hand is spread over the whole of the circular concave (A), and the cover being put on for two or three minutes, the bread is taken off ready for eating. To facilitate the operation, the "gruel" is ladled out of the "bourma" or jar with a small calabash or gourd, which, when filled, contains exactly the quantity requisite for a cake, about eighteen inches in diameter, of the thickness of a twopenny piece, and full of holes, like sponge or a honeycomb. The "teff" is considered by the Abyssinians wholesome and digestible; but so far from being satisfied of this, I am doubtful of its containing much nutritious property; and as for its taste, only fancy yourself chewing a piece of sour sponge, and you will have a good idea of what is considered the best bread in Abyssinia. With regard to the "dàgousha," its flavour is even worse than the "teff," having generally a gritty, sandy taste in the mouth; and its virtues may be judged of from the fact that it undergoes but little change in passing through the stomach.

Another kind of bread is called "kitcha." Unlike the "tabita," it is crisp and dry, being made merely of flour and water poured over a hollowed iron, called "maglo hatzin;" and baked. If it is of wheat, many persons spread a little butter on the iron before pouring out the dough, which gives the bread a taste something like bad piecrust. Made in this way the "kitcha" is perhaps one of the most wholesome and palatable sorts of bread. In size it is nearly of the same diameter as the "tabita,"

but much thinner; for, if well made, it should be scarcely thicker than a wafer.*

Next comes the sort of cake called "hambasha." This, being invariably made of wheat, is perhaps the bread most suitable to an European's taste. To make it, a stiff dough, as in Europe, is first prepared, which is generally leavened by the addition of a little "mése" (honey-wine) or beer, for they understand little of the art of kneading. It is then left two days in the sun; after which it is formed into cakes about nine inches in diameter by one and a half thick, and baked on the "magogo." The top of each cake is tastefully ornamented with devices made with a knife, after the fashion of a pie-crust edge: but its tempting appearance is counterbalanced by the disadvantage of its being heavy.

The last description of bread of which we have to speak is the "ḥanza," a large cake, more frequently met with in the lower provinces of Tigré. It is made either of millet or teff, and in the following manner: first, two tabita cakes are shaped as above described, a coating of "dillikh" (a paste made with red pepper, something like chatney or mulligatawny) is spread on each, and they are then stuck together by a layer of dough spread between them, and rebaked so as to form only one. This kind of cake and the one last described are often given as presents by the peasantry to their richer

* Among the ancients bread was never cut, but baked in *thin cakes*, which were easily broken. "This ancient form of bread is still retained in the paschal cake of the Jews and the *knæck bröd* of the Swedes. The latter, which is almost as brittle as biscuit, is not cut when used, but broken."

neighbours. So much for the bread: now for the meat.

But lest any one should accuse me of unnecessary detail in my descriptions of the native food and drink, or thence form an opinion that such matters occupy much of my mind as well as of my body, I would here say that my observations have been extended for many reasons, partly in the hope that the ladies, in reading them, may find some matter to add to their receipt-books, and partly because it is a purely classical and poetical taste to be curious about eating and drinking. For this we have the best authority. Horace himself must needs inquire of his friend Fundanius, who had just returned from a party, what sort of a dinner he had had. "Da (si non grave est"), "tell us," says he ("if it don't bore you"), "quæ prima iratum ventrem placaverit esca"—"what food first appeased your fierce digestive organs." I cannot pretend to present such a list of dainties as did Fundanius. Nasidienus was a better caterer than even Oubi, Prince of Æthiopia. The natives here, though Christian, have generally a decided prejudice against pig; so that no Leucanian boar can be expected; and vegetables are almost unknown. Mæcenas had his choice of Alban or Falernian; but I was obliged to be satisfied with a kind of fermented toast and water, called here beer, or an equally inferior tipple made with honey, something after the manner of mead.

The flesh of bulls and oxen is little relished; that of cows, spayed goats, and sheep being much more esteemed. A fat cow costs in the market from two to

three dollars (8*s.* 4*d.* to 12*s.* 6*d.*). On every festive occasion, as a saint's day, birth, marriage, &c., it is customary for a rich man to collect his friends and neighbours, and kill a cow and one or two sheep. The principal parts of the cow are eaten as "broundo," or raw beef; the remainder is cut into small pieces, and cooked with the favourite sauce of butter and the "dillikh" paste. This is the only sort of made dish, though they vary the principal component parts; but whether fish, flesh, fowl, or vegetables predominate, the same peppery and greasy sauce is always the accompaniment. Various other ingredients are sometimes chopped into it, and they are then stewed together in an earthen dish or pot, in which the *mess* is sent to table. In this preparation there is usually so large a quantity of the red pepper paste that the whole is of a bright-red hue, and a drop of the sauce is sufficient to produce a blood-red stain on any article of dress.

The slaughtering of animals in Abyssinia is attended with a regular ceremony, as in Mohammedan countries. The animal is thrown down with its head to the east, and the knife passed across its throat while the words, "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," *

* The words are, "Bísm Ab, ou Weld, ou Menfus Kouddos." Salt, I believe, pretends to correct Bruce's error in these words—but I cannot refer to it at once; if he does, he is wrong; for he himself has made a shocking mess of it—*vide* Valentia's Travels, vol. iii. p. 136, where he says, "*pronouncing at the same time, 'Bis m'Ullah Guebra Menfus Kedus,' a style of invocation that seems to be borrowed from the followers of Mohammed.*" Now "Bis m'Ullah," or rather Bísm Illàhi, is the Arabic for "In the name of God," and would on no account or occasion be used by a Christian Abyssinian. I myself have frequently been corrected

are pronounced by the butcher. Almost before the death struggle is over persons are ready to flay the carcase, and pieces of the raw meat are cut off and served up before this operation is completed; in fact, as each part presents itself it is cut off, and eaten while yet warm and quivering. In this state it is considered, and justly so, to be very superior in taste to what it is when cold. Raw meat, if kept a little time, gets tough; whereas if eaten fresh and warm it is far tenderer than the most tender joint that has been hung a week in England. The taste is, perhaps from imagination, rather disagreeable at first, but far otherwise when one gets accustomed to it; and I can readily believe that raw meat would be preferred to cooked meat by a man who from childhood had been accustomed to it.

It would appear that the Abyssinians have a little improved in humanity since Bruce's time. He says, speaking of the manner in which cattle are killed, and of the butcher, "I should beg his pardon, indeed, for calling him an assassin, as he is not so merciful as to aim at the life, but, on the contrary, to keep the beast alive till he be totally eaten up. Having satisfied the

rather sharply by them when from habit I have accidentally used this expression, or "Al hamdu l'Illahi" (thanks be to God), and have never succeeded in proving to them that it mattered not whether God were called by the name of Allah or Izgyheir (as the Tigré people have it). They always insist that to use these words is tantamount to declaring oneself a Mohammedan. "Guebra Menfus Kedus," or (as I should write it) Gabro Menfus Kouddous, is the name of an Abyssinian saint of great repute, and means "The Slave of the Holy Ghost;" so that Mr. Salt's invocation, if translated from the two languages which compose it, would be in English, "In the name of God, the Slave of the Holy Ghost."

Mosaical law, according to his conception, by pouring these six or seven drops upon the ground, two or more of them fall to work: on the back of the beast, and on each side of the spine, they cut skin-deep: then putting their fingers between the flesh and the skin, they begin to strip the hide of the animal half way down its ribs, and so on to the buttock, cutting the skin wherever it hinders them commodiously to strip the poor animal bare. All the flesh on the buttocks is then cut off, and in solid, square pieces, without bones, or much effusion of blood; and the prodigious noise the animal makes is a signal for the company to sit down to table." And again, after describing the feast, he continues: "All this time the unfortunate victim at the door is bleeding indeed, but bleeding little. As long as they can cut off the flesh from his bones, they do not meddle with the thighs or the parts where the great arteries are. At last they fall upon the thighs likewise; and soon after, the animal, bleeding to death, becomes so tough that the cannibals, who have the rest of it to eat, find it very hard work to separate the flesh from the bones with their teeth like dogs." Now, I must say I never saw any such cruelty practised in my time; but that does not at all shake my confidence in Bruce's veracity. The country is to all appearance so much changed—in some points for the better, in many for the worse—that I can perfectly believe such scenes to have taken place in Bruce's time.

Among great men there is a fashion in the choice of the part of the animal they prefer for "broundo."

Dejatch Oubi formerly touched nothing but the "tannash," or rump; but he has changed his taste, and now eats only the "ingadyé," which is the inside of the thigh. Dejatch Ma-at-semto prefers the "chickunna," which is the piece on the outside, from the thigh-bone downwards. Fitaurari Garrinchael will eat only the "shint," or strips down each side of the back-bone. The "tallak" is eaten by more ordinary persons, and is taken from the hip-bone downwards, next the "chickunna," which however is nearer the belly.

When a cow is killed in a chieftain's establishment, there is not a part of it, from the horns to the hoofs, that does not belong, by right, to some member of his household. For instance, the gunners on guard ("zevaynia") have the "frimbia," or strip down the chest. The royal washerman has the "tooncha," or second joint of one arm; while the "gasha-jagry," or shield-bearer, has the similar joint of the other. The "quàhmy," or wood-carriers, have the privilege of killing and skinning the animals: their perquisite consists in the right of cutting a small piece off each division of the meat; two-thirds of the thus collected morsels belong to them, and the remaining third to the beaters of the "negarit," or big drums. The neck, paunch, and liver, belong to the grass-cutters; the thigh-bones, with the meat remaining on them, to the "gombaynia," or women who carry the "gombos," or jars, of mead for their master's use when on a journey. The porters, who carry the chief's provisions on like occasions, take the "talma," or fat membrane of the belly, and a bone with a little bit of meat

from the shoulder. The tongue and cheeks are preserved for great men. My friend Dejatch Shayto is very fond of them raw: they are brought to him while the animal is expiring. The "ambiltania," or fifers, have, like the drummers and "quàhmy," a small piece off each portion of the meat. The "azmàry," or buffoon, claims the gristle from the "frimbia." The scribe, who writes the accounts of the food, has for his allowance a small piece of meat from the shoulder, near the "shint." The cooks have the "shimfilla," a part near the tripe. The ribs are eaten "tibsy," or broiled, on the embers of a wood-fire. The hump is another privilege of great men only; and the most renowned warrior among them has the first cut at it. They frequently keep up a friendly controversy for a long time before any one can be persuaded to put a knife into it, each politely offering to his neighbour the post of honour. It sometimes becomes a matter of serious dispute, and is suggestive of that which was occasioned by the fruit of pure Hesperian gold that was cast upon the board in the "fair Peleïan banquet-hall;" for as the apple was engraved on its gleaming rind "For the most fair," so the hump bears on its flabby red surface "For the most renowned." An instance of this once occurred in the palace of the former Ras Gouxa, Ali's father. The Amhàra warriors were undecided as to the man who should first attack this bone of contention, when the late Nebreet Welda Selassy settled the point by drawing his sword and helping himself: this he did, no doubt, as, being the only Tigréan present, he was

anxious to take the honour to himself from a feeling of patriotism. But the Amhàra chieftains did not bear the affront quietly: a quarrel was immediately fixed on the Tigrè champion by the warriors of the rival nation, two of whom more especially took it up, and he was challenged to prove the superiority he had arrogated to himself, by fighting them. This he did in a way which left them no room for complaining: he fought them both on horseback, and, what's more, killed them both. For this, however, he had to fly the country; as, although he had vanquished his adversaries in fair fight, their friends and relatives were for taking up the cause, and, the national jealousy being awakened, his life would doubtless have been sacrificed had he fallen into their hands.

The cow, and different varieties of the gazelle and antelope tribe, are the only animals which are eaten raw, excepting in certain districts of Abyssinia; as, for instance, Simyen, where the flesh of the spayed goat ("mouquet") is also considered eligible for "broundo." The mutton, at Àdoua especially, is of a very inferior quality, being as tough as leather, of about as fine grain as a coarse worsted stocking; and if you could find the minutest particle of fat on it, even with the aid of a microscope, don't eat it up at once, but keep half of it till to-morrow, lest you should never again have such good luck. Mutton is either chopped up and stewed with the peppery sauce I have before described, or broiled on the embers, but never eaten raw.

The "mantay hàmot," or "chogera," is a dish pre-

pared of the tripe and liver cut into small pieces. The contents of the gall-bladder are then squeezed over it, as also a part of the half-digested green matter found in the intestines of the animal. This dish, after having been duly seasoned with pepper, salt, &c., and a little warmed, till it acquires the natural heat of the animal, is eaten with the greatest gusto, not only by the poor, but even by the greatest chiefs in the country. This preparation is also much esteemed all over Nubia, Sennaar, and Kordofan, only with a trifling variation in these countries, where they dispense with the "green matter" and warming, but add raw onions chopped, and chilis instead of capsicums. My description will, no doubt, have already sufficed to disgust many of my readers, especially those of the fair sex; so that I dare not presume to request them to try a dish of this same chogera. Still it is an eatable dish; nay, verily, a palatable dish; and it hath, moreover, a quality for inducing men to partake freely of the *cup* which always accompanies it.

From the foregoing descriptions of the "broundo" and "chogera" of the Abyssinians, one is apt to run away with the impression that these people are by no means delicate in their choice of food, while, in truth, no nation is more scrupulously so after its own fashion. Besides refusing all animals which have teeth in their upper jaw—as the hare; and all such as have not cloven feet—as the camel, whose foot is only cloven above; and many others, from religious prejudice, of which I shall say more hereafter; they have also various

points of delicacy which differ in the several parts of the country. For instance, in some places a sick cow would be killed and eaten, for fear of its dying and the flesh becoming useless; while in other provinces no one would think of tasting it. In many parts of Tigrè veal is reckoned disgusting unless pretty large, while in Hamasayn the meat of calves two or three days old is considered a delicacy. I have even heard of a calf which had been dropped at six months and died, being eaten; and one man, who had tasted of it, assured me that its flesh was very white, tender, and good. An animal killed by a lion or leopard is by most persons considered eatable, those beasts being reckoned Christian; while, on the contrary, no one would touch the meat of an animal which had fallen a prey to the hyæna, that disgusting scavenger being considered as of the Mussulman religion. The Moslems are very lax in these points, some of them eating the flesh of the wild-boar, or the unslaughtered (and, consequently, forbidden) leavings of their brother hyæna.

My kind readers, bear with me yet. When you have been for years in a strange land, where you scarcely ever see a white face, and never perhaps meet a single fellow-countryman, with whom to hold sweet converse in your mother-tongue, will not the thoughts of home—of those you have left behind, fond scenes, friends, and relatives—sometimes present themselves? Who can doubt it? Surely, then, I may be excused for entertaining fond wishes and recollections of the past. Often, very often, in those dreary solitudes, have I wished for oysters and

porter. After much experimentizing, I discovered that a fresh sheep's liver, if cut up in small pieces and nicely arranged in a spoon, and well peppered and vinegared, with a little salt, was by no means a bad substitute for an oyster; and while eating this preparation I have sometimes shut my eyes, and almost cheated myself into the belief that I was again in England.

Fowls are the only animal food which remains to be described. Alas, poor fowls!—the biggest of them look as if but just hatched, and have no more taste than an old rag, except that imparted by the "universal sauce." The red pepper, as must already have been seen, is a staple commodity in these countries. The large-podded capsicum is grown in fields all over the most fertile parts of the country, especially near brooks, or other places where it can be well watered, either by irrigation or the natural moisture of the soil. The chili is only grown in Walkayt and one or two of the other low provinces of Tigrè; but large quantities of it are produced throughout Sennaar, Nubia, &c. The capsicum, on account of its flavour, is justly preferred by the Abyssinians to its sharp, fiery, rough little cousin. By many persons it is eaten raw with bread, but more commonly it is prepared for cookery or other uses in one of the following modes. First, "doukous" is merely the pod dried, pounded, and mixed with salt and black pepper. This is used precisely as we use pepper in this country, and is generally carried about on a journey in the crooked spiral horn of the "agazin," a large sort of antelope. The horn is neatly cleaned and polished,

then bunged up at the butt, capped with red leather, and furnished with slings of the same material, which serve for carrying or suspending it. The pepper is got out by a small hole, perforated at the point of the horn, which is kept closed by a plug. Secondly, the "owazay" is a paste made of fresh capsicums, rubbed down on the grinding-stone, with salt and pepper. The third preparation, called "dillikh," is the most important of all: it is also a paste, but is made of either dry or fresh pods, cooked on a fire, with an equal quantity of onions. After they are well done, black pepper, salt, fresh ginger, and a great variety of odoriferous herbs and other condiments are added, according to the taste of the maker; and the whole is worked down together on a "mout-han" kept on purpose, till it becomes of a soft, paste-like consistency, not unlike the Chatney paste of India. The two latter preparations are used for mixing in stews and other dishes, while all three are eaten with "broundo," or the "tibsy," as we use mustard or salt. Although vegetables, such as carrots, parsnips, &c., exist in a wild state in many parts of Abyssinia, the natives can be scarcely said to use them; for they only eat, and this but for two or three months in the year, a herb called "hamly," or "goommen," the taste of which slightly resembles spinach.* This and

* Not quite three centuries ago our own kitchen-gardens were little better supplied. "It was not," says Hume, "till the end of Henry the Eighth's reign that any salads, carrots, turnips, or other edible roots were produced in England; the little of these vegetables that was used was imported from Holland and Flanders—Queen Catherine, when she wanted a salad, was obliged to despatch a messenger thither on purpose."

lentils, cooked in their horrible oil, which from its drying properties is more like varnish, and which they call "kivvy nyhoke," are the favourite dishes during some of the fasts.

Milk is very scarce in the town of Adoua. I paid a dollar a month for the milk of a cow, which rarely yielded me more than between half a pint and a pint daily. For more than a year I gave up meat, and my food consisted altogether of clotted milk (called here "rogo") with bread, and flavoured with honey and pepper by way of change. A jar, which when new is smoked, is kept on purpose for clotting the milk, to which, on being first put into it, a little sour milk is added to assist in turning it. When clotted it is poured out for use; but the jar is never washed, the remains of the preceding day's "rogo" being sufficient to turn the evening's fresh milk into a clot, like a jelly, before morning. The natives also make a bad imitation of cheese, which they call "ajouvo." This and the "rogo" they always eat with their favourite pepper "dillikh," kneading their "teff" bread cakes into it till they make a stiff paste, which they roll up into long pellets, and poke into their own or their neighbour's mouth. Sometimes, however, these preparations of milk are served up at dinner with the other dishes, and, taken in mouthfuls alternately with the fiery stew, act most agreeably as a cooler to it.

Butter is sold either fresh, to be used as pomatum for the hair, or prepared for keeping and kitchen use. This is done by simply boiling the fresh butter in a large

vessel till the scum rises. A person is kept watching to skim this off, as fast as it appears on the surface, until the butter remains quite clear, like oil, when it is cooled and left for use, and always rétains its liquid state. This mode of clarifying butter is adopted throughout Sennaar, Kordofan, &c., and even in Egypt, and is very useful, as the butter thus prepared may be kept for any length of time, and its flavour is but slightly inferior to fresh butter.

Abyssinia may indeed boast of her honey, which she produces not only in great quantities, but also of the finest quality. There is both wild and domestic honey: the latter, however, is far superior to the former, which (excepting the one or two virgin combs found in each nest) is of a dull, dirty, brown colour, and has not the same strength of sweetness or flavour as the domestic honey. The wild bees are usually found in hollow trees in the low ravines, more especially in those called the "dima," whose nature it is to become hollow when they attain a certain growth. A little brown-looking bird, with a small yellow spot on each wing, called the bee-finder, is a sure guide to persons who are in search of wild honey; for if they attend to his merry chirp as he flutters from tree to tree, he will soon conduct them to the sweet booty they are seeking. The wild honey is generally used for making "mése" or "tedge." The domestic honey is sometimes kept for a year or two before it is exposed for sale, and at the expiration of that time is often found to have settled down in the jar, and become a solid mass. Once or twice I have received

honey as a present, or have bought it in the market, in such a state of solidity that I had great difficulty in cutting it with a knife; nor could I fairly get at it without breaking the jar, when it came out a solid lump, of a pale straw colour, approaching to white. More frequently, however, it is found in a semi-liquid state, of a pale lemon colour, containing white crystallized lumps, so exceedingly sweet, that I had considerable difficulty in eating a bit the size of a walnut; and I remember a person who became ill on taking a somewhat larger quantity.

For drink, the Abyssinians have their "tedge," or "mése" (as the Tigrè people call it), and their different sorts of beer. The general name of this latter beverage is in the Tigrè language "soua," and in the Amhàric "talla." The "mése" is a kind of mead: its name has an affinity to the German "meth;" whence our mead is derived. It is thus prepared:—One part of honey is mixed with five or six parts of water, according to the strength required. This honey-water is put into a narrow-mouthed jar with a little "tsaddoo" (a sort of bitter bark), or "géso" (a bitter herb), which, in this compound, are analogous to hops in beer. It is then left in the sun till fit for drinking, which depends much on the temperature of the weather. The criterion of its being ready is that the liquor has fermented to such a degree as to have nearly lost its original sweetness. I have heard this beverage praised by some Europeans; but as made by the natives it was always too bitter for my taste: and in this respect it seems I am not sin-

gular, for Bruce complains that it always gave him a headach. It not unfrequently has the effect of an aperient on persons unaccustomed to it. The Abyssinians, however, get through an almost incredible quantity. I should be afraid to mention the number of horns that I have heard of a man's drinking at one sitting.

The "soua," or beer, is made as follows:—Dàgousha flour is made into a dough with water, and left to ferment for two or three weeks, during which time they fumigate it with the smoke of various kinds of wood, such as in the Tigrè language are called "tarsos," "agam," "owleh," "mabté," "tchandak," &c. After this the dough is divided into cakes and baked on a flat iron, and the day following a mixture of barley-flour and water is made, which, together with the cakes, is put into a large jar of water; to this is added at the same time a small quantity of the bitter "géso." After being allowed to remain quiet for a few hours the beer is fit for drinking. There are different qualities of beer, each bearing a different name, according to its age, strength, &c. One very strong kind is called "douqua." Beer, which from having been kept for some days becomes clear, is named "serrouy."

When the master of an Abyssinian house takes his meals, all his servants stand round the doorway and look on; which custom, though it has at first a disagreeable effect to a stranger, is in reality a mark of respect to their superior, showing that they are in attendance on him, and not merely eating his bread and idling their time

away. The master's feeding-time, in fact, is a sort of muster for the servants. The dinner-tables in great houses are usually of wood, roughly made, but frequently also of wicker-work neatly put together. When a party is expected fresh grass is spread on the floor, and the tables are ranged of various sorts and sizes—the highest nearest the master's end of the room—some wooden, some wicker, some broad, others narrow, it being only in a few fashionable establishments that two or three of corresponding size can be found. All of course are very low, being made of the height most convenient for a person seated on the ground; for chairs are unknown in the country. The table being spread, the bread is brought in by servants in large baskets carried on their heads. If the bread be all made in the house, the cakes of inferior quality are ranged at the top of each basket, while the better sort are underneath, or the different kinds are brought in in different baskets. In either case the piles are so arranged on the tables that the best sort appears at the top of each pile. It often happens, when there is likely to be a great consumption, that additional bread is borrowed of the neighbours or servants of the house. Each basket of the subsidy is then carefully examined by the "azzadge," or house steward, and the contents disposed of as above; namely, the "dàgousha" and barley bread is laid at the bottom; the coarse kind of "teff" comes next; and at the top of all, the finest white bread. Before each person is placed a pile of from eight to ten of these cakes for a small party; but at such an establishment as Oubi's

sometimes each guest would have thirty or more cakes before him. This is so arranged because the nobler guests are first seated and eat of the finest bread; then those of humbler rank take their places and partake of the second class of bread; and so on in succession till the coarsest is eaten by the servants and poor friends. The cakes supply the place of napkins, as the fingers of the guests are frequently wiped on them after being dipped in the dish or rendered bloody by the raw meat. This, however, does not in the least affect the appetites of those who, coming after, have to eat them. The company being assembled, the most distinguished personages are requested to be seated, and are placed according to their rank by the "Shelika zifàn beyt" or "Agafàri Adderash," two dignitaries of whose duties, &c., we will more fully speak in the proper place. A good deal of politeness sometimes ensues as to precedence, but, all being at last settled down into their places, the "soub-hè" or cooked dishes are brought in by the cook-women, each of whom receives a piece of bread dipped in the dish she has carried. These are placed on the table according to their quality, the best nearest the top; and the "asalafy" or waiters* take a piece of bread from before each person, and, sopping it in the sauce, return it to him. They also serve the guests with meat from the dishes, cutting, or with their fingers† tearing it into pieces of a convenient size; and

* The office of "asalafy" in Abyssinia would seem to correspond nearly with that of the "scissor," "carptor," or "diribitor" of the ancients.

† I imagine there can be no need for me to say that forks are not used

in doing this they frequently show great favouritism, giving the kidneys and tit-bits to one, and the gristle and bones to another. They are very attentive, never allowing any one to be a moment unsupplied. The guests take their bread and sauce and mix them together into a sort of paste, of which they make balls, long and rounded like small black puddings: these they consider it polite to poke into the mouths of their neighbours; so that, if you happen to be a distinguished character, or a stranger to whom they wish to pay attention, which was often my case, you are in a very disagreeable position; for your two neighbours, one on each side, cram into your mouth these large and peppery proofs of their esteem so quickly one after the other, that, long before you can chew and swallow the one, you are obliged to make room for the next. They generally succeed in half choking you; and if you feel you are losing the skin of your mouth, lips, and throat from the fiery effects of the pepper, you dare not ask for water, as that would be considered rude; and the mead is seldom served till the dinner is over. While these dishes, which are generally made of mutton, are on the

in Abyssinia any more than they are in other eastern countries, except among a few of the Turks, who have very lately borrowed their use from the Franks.

Many of my friends have asked me if I had ever eaten with my fingers, and when I replied that I had done so for more than six years, and that even when in Egypt I continued to do so "*par préférence*" in my own lodgings, and up to the day I got on board the steamer which was to convey me homeward, they appeared astonished, nay, even horrified. Some of my readers may be ignorant of the fact that within the last two centuries forks were rare in England.

table, the cow is killed and flayed outside; and immediately on their removal the "broundo" is brought in, each servant carrying a yet quivering lump in his hands. The choicest pieces are carried to the highest tables, where are seated the master of the feast and the most distinguished guests. There is usually a piece of meat to every five or six persons, among whom arises some show of ceremony as to which of them shall first help himself; this being at length decided, the person chosen takes hold of the meat with his left hand, and

An Abyssinian feeding.

with his sword or knife cuts a strip a foot or fifteen inches long from the part which appears the nicest and

tenderest. The others then help themselves in like manner.

If I should fail in describing properly the scene which now follows, I must request the aid of the reader's imagination. Let him picture to himself thirty or forty Abyssinians, stripped to their waists, squatting round the low tables, each with his sword or knife or "shotel" in his hand, some eating, some helping themselves, and some waiting their turn, but all bearing in their features the expression of that fierce gluttony which one attributes more to the lion or leopard than to the race of Adam. The imagination may be much assisted by the idea of the lumps of raw pink and blue flesh they are gloating over. But I have yet to describe how they eat the strip of meat which I have just made one of the party cut off. A quantity of "dillikh" or "aou-a-zé" being laid on his bread, he dips one end of the meat into it, and then, seizing it between his teeth, while he holds the other end in his left hand, he cuts a bit off close to his lips by an upward stroke of his sword, only just avoiding the tip of his nose, and so on till he has finished the whole strip.

The "tibsy," or broiled meat, is brought in nearly at the same time with the "broundo." It consists of the rib-bones, with the meat cut in strips, and hanging like a tassel from one end. The servant holds the bone in his hand, and each of the guests cuts off a strip, and eats it with the pepper as he does the "broundo."

I must not omit to mention one good custom which the Abyssinians have in common with the Moham-

medans—that of washing hands before and after eating and drinking. The "quontach" is a servant appointed to bring water before and after meals to each guest, usually in a horn, but sometimes, in new-fashioned great houses, in a brass ewer. While the people are yet eating, this servant comes round to every one with a wicker dish-cover or basket, and begs a trifle in the name of the Virgin Mary, or of the Saviour, whereupon each person gives him a portion of what he is eating. This is the custom on family party days only, when not many persons are assembled; but at grand entertainments this is not usual. On these occasions the boys about the house get under the tables like so many dogs, lying down in all the filth there accumulated; and by alternately pinching and caressing the feet and legs of the visitors induce them to throw down morsels; but although this is almost always done, it can scarcely be said to be so much allowed as winked at. These little imps are often very handy, as, when one is half choked by the peppery balls, the easiest way to get rid of them is to let them drop unobserved. The boys will not fail to pick them up and devour them greedily, even should they have been half chewed by you already. I have seen bones gnawed and regnawed by a dozen mouths, before the poor patient dog outside was allowed to have his turn.

The Abyssinians have pleasing manners in receiving anything offered to them, taking it in both hands, and bowing their heads at the same time. After the eating is over, a jar of mead or beer is brought in by one

or more of the "logouàmy," or grass-cutters, and placed on a small stool kept for the purpose. The jar is sometimes so large that one man cannot possibly carry it. Its mouth is covered with a piece of rag drawn tight over it as a strainer, to prevent the bits of wax, bark, and other extraneous matter from falling into the drinking vessels when the mead is poured out. These vessels are the "wancha," or horns (commonly used in the country, but more often for beer than for mead), common tumblers, and a sort of bottle from Venice called "brillé." The office of pouring out the mead devolves on one of the "logouàmy" who brings in the jar. He supports it under his arm, raising and lowering it to fill the "wancha," which are held by another servant, called the "fellàky," who keeps tapping or scratching the rag with his finger, to facilitate the free flow of the liquor. Under the mouth of the jar is a bowl to catch the droppings, which are the perquisite of the "fellàky." It is easy for this functionary to appropriate to himself one glass out of every five or six, if he knows how to arrange matters with the "logouàmy," who holds the jar so that he may keep pouring on a little after each vessel is filled. Besides this, he has the right of emptying into his reservoir about one inch of the liquor from every "wancha" filled (which is a good deal, as they are very broad at the mouth and narrow downwards), and from every "brillè" or bottle two inches. The first horn poured out is drunk by the "logouàmy" who holds the jar, and the second by the "tedge melkénia," who has the superin-

tendence of the brewery. The "fellàky" then arranges the horns on the ground near him as fast as they are filled, and the "asalafy," or waiter, taking them up, drinks one himself, then presents one to the master of the house, and afterwards hands them round to the company. Before offering a glass to any one the waiter pours a little of the contents into his left hand and drinks it off; this, with all the former tasting by the brewer, grass-cutter, waiter, &c., is to show that the mead is not poisoned. Notwithstanding, however, all these precautions, Dejatch Oubi never drinks without first pouring a little of the liquor on the ground, carefully turning the vessel round at the same time, so as to remove any poison that might be concealed on its edges. He seldom drinks more than a quarter of his glass, and then returns it. Other persons drink about two-thirds, the remainder being the perquisite of the waiter, who, as soon as the glass is returned to him, drinks off the contents. He would not, however, presume to put his master's cup to his lips, but raising it above his head pours the contents into his mouth from a distance. This feat is rather difficult to perform, for if he has not the knack of letting the mead flow straight down his throat, without attempting to swallow it, he must choke; and if he has not the dexterity to give a right direction to the stream, it will probably be spilt down his neck. If it be a "wancha" it is still more difficult to manage, on account of the breadth of its mouth. Persons anxious to show favour to any particular servant will pour mead into his two hands, which he holds like a trough to his

mouth, whence he imbibes it; but should the master be a martinet, like Oubi, for example, the servant would not venture to exhibit any such feats before him, but would pour the liquor into some other vessel before drinking it. It may readily be imagined that at a large party all these tops and bottoms of glasses would form together a considerable quantity, and that the "asalafy" would have as much as he could do to carry himself, to say nothing of the glasses, were he to drink all that falls to his share: so he either distributes it to his fellow-servants, or collects it in a bowl for a great tipple with his friends in the evening.

At a feast Oubi seldom speaks, making known his wishes to his "asalafies" by signs. For example, many of his principal officers (even his own sons) remain standing against the wall; custom and fear, more than a sense of respect for their master, forbidding them to be seated in his presence. Oubi then, by a sign with his finger, directs the "asalafy" to give bread to such a one, wine to another, &c.

Since the battle of Devra Tabor his son Lemma has been allowed to sit, being the eldest as well as the favourite son; but Shétou, Guonguoul, and Carsai, all remain standing. Poor Shétou, I believe, feels this preference of Lemma severely; for he doubtless considers himself a superior man in every respect to his puny elder brother. When he presents himself at his father's table, which he does as seldom as possible, he has his food given to him in a small dish-cover, held by a little boy of his father's suite, for the sake of the leav-

ings. Neither does he presume to enter his father's presence without first notifying his approach, and asking permission. Should he do otherwise, he would probably be told, in the most unceremonious way, to wait outside, or perhaps be even rudely pushed back. Shétou, too, has a rather slang way of dressing, which greatly offends his father. Sometimes he comes in with one leg of his trousers drawn up in the proper manner above his calf, and the other dangling down about his ankle. On such an occasion it would not be at all extraordinary should Oubi, after looking at him fixedly, and in his usual quiet, smiling manner, begin in the presence of all assembled, "Well done, son of a Mohammedan mother! Pretty way of wearing your breeches, isn't it? Some new fashion of your own, eh!" And turning to the "agafari," "Turn him out; turn him out!" The poor lad is put out in the most neck-and-crop manner, and returning to his tent he broods over this treatment, and vows vengeance on his brother Lemma, who, from being the favourite, is partly the cause of it.

As servants cost but little in these countries, either for wages or keep, great men maintain a large establishment. A list of the principal domestics, their employments and perquisites, may here be given. First are the two "belladt'inkatas," the superior of whom has the duty assigned to him of assisting his master with his advice on every occasion; to try all minor causes that may be brought to him for judgment; and, in fact, to act as his counsellor and *aide-de-camp*. The second fills the post of house-steward, arranging all matters

regarding the pay of the servants and other household expenses. These two are the principal men of every chief's suite, and unless highly distinguished visiters are present they sit at his right hand on feast-days. With these may be classed the "apha negous." He sits with them on important trials; and, hearing all that passes, reports it to his master, who, after having considered the case, sends him back to the place of judgment with his sentence. Next in order is the "shelika zifân beyt," who is a sort of master of the ceremonies. On days of reception his post is near the "zifân" or throne of his master, if we may apply so dignified a term to the couch on which all chiefs, even of the highest rank, recline. He passes the word for the admission of strangers to the "agafâri adderash," or audience-room doorkeeper, who, with his mate, the "tannash agafâri," or small doorkeeper, assists him in arranging the people as they enter, which he does with his long wand of office, or in turning them out again, at a sign from his master. The "helfinia askalcai" is a sort of watchman, who remains always at the door, and gives notice of arrivals, &c. The "helfinia shelika" stands constantly near his master, passes his orders to the other servants of the interior, and informs him if they are properly executed. "Ikkabeyt" is he who has in charge all the moveables belonging to his master. He has under his command a considerable body of men, who are his "chiffra" or followers. When the chief changes his residence they are employed as porters in removing his goods; and in war-time they act as soldiers. It is from

this body that Oubi generally selects a man as a safeguard to accompany travellers on their journey through his dominions, and to procure them necessary provisions. Also in the case of natives, who may have some business in which the prince's message should be delivered by one of his own servants, he calls either the "ikkabeyt" or "sheff-zagry," and orders him to furnish from his "chiffra" a man to accompany such a person on such a business. The "ikkabeyt," thereupon, selects either a favourite of his own or one whom he wishes to get new-clothed, as the messenger always expects to be clothed, if not armed, as well as to receive a present from the person with whom he is sent, more especially if his business is to convey a favourable answer in the cause in which he is interested. In ancient times it was the custom for the princes and chiefs of Abyssinia to be preceded on all occasions by a body of men called the "sheff-zagry," who carried large two-edged swords, mounted in silver, and placed in red cloth bags. This custom is now nearly extinct. Dejatch Oubi retains a body of men who still bear the name, though they are become the principal "chiffra" of lancers. Their commander is called "shelika sheff-zagry."

These may be considered as the principal officers about the court of a great man, who have the right of ingress and egress to his presence without being announced. After these come the inferior domestic servants. The "azzadge" is a sort of male housekeeper, and has the charge and distribution of all the provision, corn, &c. He and the "tedge melkénia," or butler, and

the "siggar shelika," who is over the meat department, are under the direction of the second "belladt'inkata," as also a "toquotatâry" or accountant, who reports all the incomings and outgoings of the establishment, and a scribe, who writes them. The "shelika siggar" is likewise chief of the "quàmy" or wood-carriers, who are also employed as butchers in the court. The "mitchénia," or grooms, have the "logouàmy," or grass-cutters, under their orders. The "askoratch" is the man who holds the raw beef or broiled bones for the guests to help themselves. He holds the former in both hands, and all that remains in his grasp is his perquisite. The "carra asalafy" is the knife-cleaner: he presents a knife to each person to eat his "broundo;" and the knives are returned to him with a bit of meat stuck on the point. Besides these there are the "wisht ashkeroitch," who are a lot of little boys about every house. One of these is the "makhadda tabàky," or cushion-keeper. Others take it by turns to keep off the flies during meals, or at any time when they are troublesome; and they are sometimes made to lie by the hour across their master's couch, for him to lean upon, instead of a cushion, or to sit on the floor and hold his feet.

The pay of the servants is arranged in various ways, according to their situation and circumstances. A common servant-man usually receives about ten pieces of cloth and four or five "madigas" of corn a-year; altogether equivalent to about eight dollars, or 1*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* The corn, however, varies in price, from one and a half to six "madigas" for a dollar, and the cotton cloths at

from one to three for the like sum. If, however, the man has a servant-boy—for carrying his shield, &c.—or is married, or has a mule or horse, or all of these, his pay and allowances are increased accordingly. Should their master be a "shoum," or petty chief, he generally finds means to enrich his servants at the expense of the peasantry, by sending one here to collect taxes, another there to try some petty cause, others as "balderàbbas," or introducers, to private persons who may have need of them for their affairs, &c. In such cases he diminishes their pay, and they contrive to get very good pickings in the way of presents, bribes, &c., from those persons with whom they may have to do.

APPENDIX.

COMMERCE OF ABYSSINIA AND THE RED SEA.

Commerce being the mainstay of our national wealth and power, I think that no English traveller should neglect to publish whatever little information he may acquire on that subject, even at the risk of its proving uninteresting to some of his readers. For my own part, I can scarcely hope to offer much useful matter, partly from my inexperience in commercial affairs, and partly because the trade of Abyssinia is at present on a very limited scale. The former of these objections has I hope been a little removed by the kind assistance of Mr. R. Innes of Cairo, who passed some weeks in Massàwa, in investigating the probable chance of success which a mercantile house might expect to meet with in the trade of the Red Sea. In regard to the second objection—the small amount of articles of commerce imported into and exported from Abyssinia—it must be my endeavour to show how this too might in time be done away with. A certain amount of trade is carried on now, not only by the native coasters which ply between the various ports of the Red Sea, but also between India and Jedda. When I was at the latter port there were eight or ten European-rigged vessels lying there, some the property of Englishmen, others of Indian merchants, but for the most part commanded by English captains. These vessels almost always arrive in the summer months, about May or June, and leave a month or two later.

Two recent French travellers, Messrs. Galinier and Ferret, who quote as their authority M. Fresnel, their vice-consul in Jedda, have given a very detailed account of the import and export trade of that port. Having myself great reason to

believe that M. Fresnel is in every way capable of giving good information on the subject, I shall quote their *summary*, referring those of my readers who may wish for further particulars to their work. The values are given in Austrian dollars (Maria Theresa), the European value of which is I believe about 4*s*. 2*d*., but, being an article of commerce, and the only coin known in Abyssinia, and other parts of the Red Sea, it increases in value as it approaches those countries.

SUMMARY OF THE IMPORT TRADE OF JEDDA.

	Dollars.	Dollars.
From INDIA,		
Java	42,450	
Calcutta	432,600	
Bombay	114,850	
Surat	400,000	
Total from India		989,900
From the PERSIAN GULF,		
Bassora	163,000	
Boushir	61,000	
Muscat	46,500	
Total from Persian Gulf		270,500
From AFRICAN COAST and ARABS outside the STRAITS,		
Zanzibar	77,000	
Somauli Coast	53,400	
Southern Arabia	59,000	
Total from African Coast		190,400
From YEMEN	108,400	108,400
From YAMBO	2,000	2,000
From WEST COAST of the RED SEA,		
Massàwa	25,500	
Souàkin	55,840	
Cosseir	70,000	
Total from West Coast of Red Sea		151,340
From SUEZ	423,350	423,350
From the adjacent parts of the interior	75,000	75,000
Grand Total of Imports	2,210,890	2,210,890

This table contains, of course, the list of exported articles as well as those of import, with the exception of what little is consumed in the town itself, for Jedda has no manufactures, and the produce of the adjacent country is mentioned above.

In regard to Massàwa I shall at once proceed to Mr. Innes' observations, reserving what little I have to say of my own till after their perusal, as from them it will be seen that in some small matters I differ from him in opinion. In these points I have a slight advantage over him from more experience in the country, while he has a decided pull over me from having much knowledge in business matters of which I am totally innocent. He prefaced the following remarks to me by saying that while writing them he had always in mind a commerce between Trieste (Germany), Egypt, and the Red Sea, as he deemed that a direct trade with England would not answer, partly from the length of the voyage, and partly that British manufactures were of too good and expensive a quality for these markets, where the buyers seemed to think of nothing but quantity and cheapness. Now I cannot help fancying that the "cheap and nasty" articles which he considers (and which I believe to be) the most fitted for the Abyssinian trade are to be met with in as great plenty at home as anywhere else; and as to the voyage, I should imagine that part cargoes might be dropped at Mauritius by ships en route for India, and taken to Abyssinia by smaller vessels in exchange for mules or other live stock, provisions, &c. If any speculative man were to try the trade, and had some good reason for wishing to transact his business with England direct, why should he not make Mauritius his entrepôt? One or two vessels come annually to Abyssinia for beasts of burden, and bring nothing with them but ballast: it would surely pay them to bring a small disposable cargo instead of dollars. They might also take back a few valuable articles, such as ivory, feathers, pearls, musk, &c. &c. Still I am pretty sure that, though at first the natives may look with diffidence at good quality on account of its price, they are far from being bad judges in money matters, and would soon

become used to the increase of expense, as they would learn the superiority of the article before them.

To go on with our subject: Mr. Innes says,* "From observations I have made in this place, and from repeated conversations I have had with a party here well acquainted with the Red Sea in general, and this port in particular, I think that though a good deal of business is to be done in Massowah, still I consider that a house establishing in the Red Sea ought to have its head-quarters at Jiddah, and having a correspondent here. From the nature of the country, business here, especially as regards imports, is carried on upon, I may almost say, a retail scale. The island of Massowah of itself offers a very limited field for mercantile enterprise; all that comes hither, whether from Europe or elsewhere, is bought by the Abyssinians who come down from the interior, and though the annual consumption of goods by them be considerable, still the sales are generally made on a small scale, and sometimes not a single sale can be effected for several weeks together; whilst, on the other hand, during the stay of the large caravans, sales are often made in a day to a large amount. Jiddah I consider as much more important; from its position it is the entrepôt of all goods coming from India and Egypt. The merchants of Cosseir, Yambo, Hodeyda, and Massowah draw their supplies from it. Massowah is not resorted to by the merchants of the Red Sea as Jiddah is, and a house establishing in Massowah would have to confine its import trade to supplying the Abyssinian traders. The Abyssinian export trade which passes by Massowah, of which I shall speak further on, would make a considerable annual amount; but they would rarely come down from the interior in large enough quantities at a time to enable a merchant to make operations on a large scale, without waiting a considerable time. In a word, then, I think that Massowah, though not of sufficient importance for the head-quarters of a house, ought not by any means to be overlooked, as a large

* To avoid the repetition of "he says this," and "I say that," I have, after giving his observation, put my own remarks in brackets, with my initials, thus —[. . . . . M. P.].

amount of imports might be sold there during the course of the year; and a great deal may be purchased, though in small quantities at a time, for exportation to Jiddah, Hodeyda, Egypt, and also some valuable articles for India and Europe. As regards the accommodation or safety for a house established in Massowah, though all the dwelling-houses here be built of sticks and dried grass, there are also stone magazines in the island; a house establishing here would find sufficient accommodation for its wants, and if afterwards its operations grew more extensive it would be easy to build magazines at a trifling expense. With regard to safety, I am happy to say that there is nothing to fear on that score. The island belongs to Egypt (?), and is the residence of a Turkish governor, Khalil Bey, a most estimable man, and who makes it his constant endeavour to protect the interests of the Europeans here.

"Goods from Europe pay 5 per cent. import duty without distinction (it is customary in Egypt to add 15 per cent. on the invoice, which sum is taken as a valuation, and 5 per cent. deducted); from India 5 per cent.; from Arabia and ports on the African coast 12 per cent.; from Abyssinia and the countries of the interior 12 per cent. Goods coming from Egypt with the raftia or custom-house docket come free of any extra duty. With regard to export duties, it is customary to levy the duty of 12 per cent. on goods coming from Abyssinia when they are brought over to the island of Massowah from the mainland. This once paid there is no additional duty. Though the nominal duty be 12 per cent., the natives, for tranquillity's sake, are almost always obliged to pay more in the shape of presents to the different officials, and for this reason goods bought by a European, or agent of a European house, before they are introduced to Massowah, would stand him cheaper than they would to a native, and the European would have the advantage in reselling them in the other ports of the Red Sea.

"Though many 'would-be philanthropists' pretend to think that the occupation of the island of Massowah by the Egyptians is a most flagrant piece of tyranny and injustice on their part, I think, as far as regards commercial interest, it is a great

benefit; as, whatever may be said of the corruption of Ottoman rule, it is a regular government, and does not prejudice Europeans in the least. I look forward with pleasure to the now talked of occupation of the coast of Yemen by the Turkish troops, as the most lucky thing that could happen for commerce. The authorities in no way annoy or thwart any one carrying on business in a lawful manner, and all goods may be imported or exported with the exception of munitions of war, as arms or ammunition, the introduction of which to the interior is forbidden by the government; but even this is winked at if carried on on a not very extensive scale.

"The island of Massowah was chosen by the Portuguese, and subsequently by the Turks, as a settlement chiefly on account of the safeness of the harbour, which from all I have heard on the subject is superior to any harbour in the Red Sea.

"There is no regular communication between any port or ports of the Red Sea (except between Aden and Suez by steamer). Here we are entirely dependent on boats crossing to Jiddah for communication with Egypt, and consequently much time is lost. The governor even is obliged to intrust his government despatches to any boat that may happen to be starting for Jiddah—thence they are forwarded to Suez in the same manner. The communication with the interior is very uncertain, and as regards Europeans generally unsafe. I do not think it would be at all for the benefit of a house to buy goods in the interior, as the country is always in a very unsettled state, and very little dependence can be placed on the good faith of the natives, who look with jealousy on a European trader going to the interior. I think that all that would be necessary would be to have an agent *here*, who could buy and sell on the Turkish territory without fear of molestation or risk. Occasionally goods might be purchased in the interior to advantage, but as a general rule it is not recommendable. With regard to sending goods into the country, it is a thing that no one acquainted with the country would advise. Goods may be both bought and sold in Massowah with profit and no

risk; and though one might buy and sell in the interior to much greater advantage than here, still the risk outweighs the profit.

"Small caravans from Tigré and the nearer parts of Abyssinia are continually arriving, but the great caravans from Gondar and the Galla countries arrive only once a year, between the months of May and August. They are the most important, as they bring down all the valuable exports, such as gum, senna, musk, ivory, coffee, gold, wax, &c. They also buy largely of imports to take with them on their return. The means of transport in the interior are only mules, and as there are no such things as roads in the country their progress is slow and difficult. The great caravans take about five months from Gondar to the coast, a journey easily performed by a traveller in twenty days. The crossing of the various rivers is always attended with more or less danger. Boats are perfectly unknown to them, at least to those who do not come down to the coast, and the trader is obliged to have his goods floated over on rafts, pushed by men swimming, or wait for several months for the dry season to cross without danger, the water being then low. I may here mention a fact with regard to this port which promises to be beneficial to European traders: I refer to the recent determination of the Honourable East India Company to put a stop to the slave-trade in the Red Sea. Mussulmen coming here to meet the caravans have hitherto got their goods easier off their hands than Europeans, inasmuch as the former were able to take slaves in exchange; the latter, not being able to do this, could only sell or barter for produce. The Mussulmen were thus better able to deal with the natives in articles of importation: now the abolition of the slave-trade will place them on an equal footing. The principal exports from Massowah are—

"*Gold.*—That which comes from the interior is of three descriptions: First quality—Sennaar gold, which comes to market in rings or links. This quality may be purchased at from 17 to 20 German crowns (Maria Theresa) per ounce. Second quality—Abyssinian gold, in grains or beads, value

13 to 15 dollars per ounce. Third quality—Abyssinian gold, in ingots, value 9 to 11 dollars per ounce.

"*Ivory* is sold by the 'wakieh,' of 39 Egyptian rottoli* each. On purchasing, the price for the first quality merely is fixed. This quality comprises merely tusks of above one wakieh each in weight, and free of hollowness. The second quality, weighing each tusk from 25 rottoli to one wakieh each. The third comprises all tusks below the weight specified for the second quality. The price of the first quality being fixed upon, the second quality is one-half of its price, and the third one-half of the second. From notes I observe that at the beginning of August ivory of first quality sold from 32 to 34 dollars a wakieh; at the end of the same month at 26 to 28 dollars; and a great deal was taken to India by the Banyans: in fact it is nearly all bought by them for that market.

"*Musk* may be bought at from 14 to 15 dollars per ounce avoirdupois, duty paid. To a person accustomed to purchase this article in Egypt this price may appear dear; but you must note that here the article is sold in its original purity. On its arrival at Jiddah it is adulterated with blood and other ingredients to increase its weight; and again in Egypt it is subjected a second time to the same process.

"*Coffee.*—This article may now be purchased here at one dollar per 16 rottoli. This quality is considered excellent, and might almost rival Mocha coffee in the European market. The quantity hitherto brought down annually from the interior is small, but increases; and most probably in a year or two two or three cargoes might be made up for annual exportation. The duty, 12 per cent., is payable by the purchaser.

"*Bees'-wax* may be had at 25 dollars per cantar of 100 rottoli, duty included.

"*Butter* (*ghee*) *and honey.*—These articles are of course not adapted for the European markets, but a lucrative and continued trade might be carried on in these two articles between this port and Jiddah: it would be necessary, however, to procure a quantity of earthen jars from Egypt, to contain each about

* The "rottol" is about 17¾ ounces avoirdupois.

10 to 12 cantars weight, to put the butter in, as it is brought down in a liquid state in skins, and sold without the skins.

"*Pearls from Dhalac Island* may be had from July to September in the island of Dhalac, about 35 miles distant from Massowah. The Banyans have had this trade in their hands from time immemorial, and they are taken to India. The Banyans make a good thing of the trade, as they barter Indian cloths and stuffs of little value for the pearls. These pearls are, I believe, inferior in quality to those of the Persian Gulf; but the divers rarely go down in more than six fathoms water. I have often thought that it would be a good speculation to have a boat there in the season, furnished with a proper diving apparatus, helmet, &c. The fishery is carried on in the months of April, May, June, and July. The island pays an annual tribute of 700 dollars to the Pasha of Egypt by Massowah, and I think very little difficulty would be made to an European's fishing there for pearls.

"*Tortoise-shell.*—There are three qualities of this article. The entire shell of the animal is composed of thirteen pieces. First quality—shells weighing about 52 ounces, price in general 6½ dollars per *menn* (this is a weight peculiar to this place and this article; it is 3 rottoli Egyptian, or about 52 ounces). Second quality—shells weighing about 40 ounces, price about 4 dollars per menn. Third quality is composed of all the remaining small pieces, and may be had at a trifle.

"*Gum and Senna.*—Some years ago a good deal was exported, but since the occupation of Massowah and Souakin by the Egyptians this trade is nearly extinct, owing to these articles being monopolized by the Pasha; and as he with his usual rapacity fixed the price of these articles at a very low figure, the natives have almost entirely neglected them, so much so, that none is to be had here now even for the government."—[Great quantities of gum are to be procured in Abyssinia, as nearly all the trees are mimosas, and senna is in many places equally abundant. The natives would be glad enough to collect and exchange these articles for corn, which, as will hereafter be shown, is not expensive, measure for measure. As to passing

Massawa, I believe the Sultan has got the island back again during this last year or two: if so, there would be no monopoly; if not, there must be other good situations for a port which don't belong to either him or Egypt, Amphila for instance.—M. P.]

"*Coffee.*—The quality of this article is superior to the Yemen coffee, and, if a little more were grown, it would rival it in the European markets."—[I believe that a great deal is grown in the Galla countries, part of which passes by way of Shoa. There is no doubt that much of the best Mocha coffee, as we usually call what is grown in Yemen, comes from Abyssinia.—M. P.] "Wheat is produced in abundance in Abyssinia, and may be purchased sometimes so low as from 400 to 500 rottoli for a dollar, but the total want of roads, and the difficulty and expense of transport, added to the peculation and extortion of the Egyptian employés, prevent the natives from speculating in it. A good business might be done occasionally by Europeans in this article, by buying mules in the interior when there is any demand for these animals in the colonies, loading them with wheat, barley, beans, &c., and bringing them to Massowah; the profit on the sale of the mules would leave the grain nearly at the same figure at which it had been bought in the interior, and might be sold at a good profit. Massowah at present draws her supplies of wheat from Loheia, Hodeida, and Toccar (near Souakin): though the price of wheat naturally depends on the state of the market, the average price may be put down as 16 dollars per 4 sacks of 300 rottoli each, or 75 rottoli per dollar." [The enormous difference here stated must strike any one, especially as the principal wheat countries of Tigré are only five or six days' journey from Massàwa. Addy Grat, Agamy, and Enderta may perhaps be considered as such, though I believe Hamaseyn, which is by half nearer, grew a great deal in her days of prosperity. Still wheat is not by any means plentiful in most parts of the country, though, if it became an article of commerce, it would undoubtedly increase enormously. There are vast tracts of fine land still uncultivated, capable of growing anything, and a great deal of corn of other sorts is

grown, teff, &c., which the natives prefer to wheat. In the markets of Tigré, wheat is sold by the madiga of 16 inkàs, the inkà being a round wooden measure, the diameter of which should be about 8 inches, and depth 7. For measures of length the natives use those that nature has given them, *i. e.* spans, cubits, fingers, &c. I had no tape or rule with me, but adopted the native fashion in these matters. Thus their measure of an inkà is that it should be a span (forefinger and thumb) across the mouth, and so deep, that when the fingers are thrust in, leaving the thumb outside, the longest finger should not reach the bottom by two fingers' breadth. When I first arrived in Abyssinia, corn of all sorts was very dear, as it was the time of "Oubi's teskar" of which I have before spoken, and the soldiers and government receiving by the "Gual Ourai," or double measure, we therefore could only get one and a half madigas ordinary measure for a dollar. Afterwards on my return from Addy Àbo we procured four madigas for the same price, and it continued getting cheaper till I left the country, till it reached six and a half madigas (teff and wheat) for a cloth, or nine and three quarters for a dollar—the dollar being then worth one and a half cloths.—M. P.]

"*Cowries and other shells* are bought by the Banyans for India. Ostrich feathers may be had in small quantities; the quality to be procured from the neighbourhood of Massowah is superior to that found elsewhere; the best feathers are to be had from eight to ten dollars per rottoli; black feathers very cheap. A person in the country informed me that cochineal might be produced with great success in the low land between the coast and the first range of mountains, and that in the upper country sugar, indigo, and cotton would thrive; as I have heard various opinions on the subject, I merely note it without comment."—[But *I* would make a comment, just to say that I am sure they would thrive, and that well. Cotton is grown abundantly in many parts of Tigré (the northern Quollas), on the worst quality of land they possess, and in still greater quantities in Walkäit. As for the others, I don't think that any one who knows Abyssinia would doubt that almost any-

thing in the world would grow in some part or other of it; for without going across the Taccazy for the mountains of Simyen, some of which are nearly 15,000 feet high, or the fertile table-lands and plains of Woggera, Bellissa, &c., or the still more fertile shores of the lake Tzàna, we have in Tigré every variety of climate and soil, vast tracts of table-land some thousand feet above the sea, plains on a lower elevation, and, below all, the dark-soiled, hot, swampy valleys and Mazzaga. Wild olive-trees, palms, and some other fruit-trees are in places frequent, as also a sort of grape; none of these are however eatable from want of cultivation.—M. P.]

Mr. Innes was at Massàwa for a few weeks only, and, as he mentions, unfortunately not at the season of the arrival of the great caravans from the interior. Anxious to learn the amount of goods brought down by them, I got three Abyssinians (in Cairo) to reckon over with me the names of the principal merchants, and the number of mules each one usually brought down to the coast: we could only remember nineteen men, whom they put altogether at about 800 mules. Besides these, there are many more whom we could not remember, and I think I shall not overshoot my mark if I put the number of loads annually delivered at Massàwa at 1200 or more, averaging 250 to 300 lbs. weight each. These are principally of coffee, musk, ivory, &c., the butter, honey, and so forth, coming down in smaller quantities at all times of the year. The following diary by Mr. Innes of six weeks' arrivals at and departures from Massàwa will show this, and also give the prices and other useful matter respecting customs duties, &c.:—

Massowah, Sept. 1, 1848.

Arriving here in the beginning of the month of August, and being too much occupied in other affairs to get any information on the mercantile operations which took place here in that month, I find myself obliged merely to give a short detail of what I have since heard on that subject. Several caravans arrived during the month from different parts of the interior, bringing ivory, hides, coffee, &c.

Ivory.—Sales were made about the beginning of the month at 32 to 34 dollars per wakieh (39 rottoli Egypt.), half cash and half pay-

able in Indian stuffs, such as marawdi, suli, copper pieces, kohl, beads, &c.; but five days later, a large quantity of the article having arrived from the interior by another caravan, the price fell to from 26 to 28 dollars, first quality, payable in money at six months' term. The Banyans, of whom there are about six or seven houses here, sold off their manufactures at low prices to get cash, and made large purchases of ivory, the price being so low.

Coffee.—In the beginning of the month, this article was sold at 12 rottoli for a dollar; fifteen days later 14 lbs. was to be had at the same price, and on the 28th of the month 16 to 16½ rottoli. An arrival of this article by a caravan from Gondar, at the end of August, renders it probable that the article will still diminish in value.

Musk.—Large quantities arrived in August, but, owing to the total want of demand for the article, the whole parcel is still in the Custom-house. I am informed by a merchant here, that last year current prices were 9 to 9½ dollars the wakieh. The price now asked is 6½, but no purchasers.

In the beginning of August we had an arrival from Mauritius—the Jules Aglac, of Nantes. She brought a cargo of mules from France for that port, and came here for a cargo of the same. She brought no inward cargo, excepting five or six casks of French wine. One was sold to Lieutenant Adams, of the Tigris, for 50 dollars. It ran about 300 bottles. The rest was bought up by Degontin, French consular agent.

The Banyans, during the month of August, went over to Dhalac to make their annual purchases of pearls, mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell, and cowries. These fisheries are carried on by the natives during the months of April, May, June, and July only. These fisheries produce annually about 20,000 to 30,000 dollars' worth of pearls, but little tortoiseshell.

A caravan arrived from the Galla country on the 30th, bringing 100 crs. coffee, 100 crs. bees'-wax, 70 horns of musk (the horns contain generally from 6 to 10 rottoli); also some gold. It is difficult to ascertain the exact quantity of this article brought down to Massowah, so much of it is smuggled in by the merchants to escape the duty. A quantity of ivory also arrived by this caravan, to the value of 8000 dollars. In the Custom-house statements of the arrivals of goods from the interior, the *value* merely is given,

not the weight. The ivory on arrival remains in bond until sales are effected, and the duty laid on according to the price obtained. The duty is levied on musk in the same manner; and even after the article has been purchased remains in the divan until it be exported, when each horn is sealed with the official seal of the Massowah Custom-house. This is done to prevent adulteration, which I learn is done in Jiddah and other ports of the Red Sea to a great extent. 125 slaves were also brought down, of whom a large proportion were females. Halil Bey bought a handsome girl for 100 dollars.

To-day a native boat left for Hodeida. Her cargo consisted of 6000 drs. ivory, and 110 bales mother-of-pearl shells, some tortoise-shell and cowries, for the Indian market.

Sales.—The whole of the ivory which arrived on 30th ult. was sold to-day. First quality at 28 dollars, half cash down, half goods. The purchasers were Banyan and Yemen merchants.

Arrivals.—10 skins honey and 10 skins ghee; also 100 unsalted hides, which were bought up at 3 for a dollar.

Coffee could be had cheap now, as there is no demand. The native holders would readily sell at 16 to 16½ rottoli per dollar. Sugar (Mauritius or Indian) would sell well. There is not an ounce of the article in market at this moment.

Sept. 2. Owing to the Mussulman holidays, very little business is being transacted at this moment. In fact, to-day not a single sale has been effected.

Arrivals from the Interior.— 200 medaneh butter (each 23 rottoli), a few skins honey, and about 100 rottoli cardamom. This article has the same flavour as the Indian spice of that name, but is much larger, being about the size of a walnut.

About one-half of the ivory bought by the Banyans yesterday was sent off in a boat to overtake the buggalow, which started yesterday for Hodeida.

Caravans from Galla and Gondar are daily expected. Owing to the low price of ivory the native merchants have expended nearly all their ready cash; and money is at this moment so scarce, that a traveller from the interior was unable to obtain Austrian dollars, although he offered Spanish dollars in exchange, dollar for dollar, and five per cent. besides. In fact I am persuaded that a thousand dollars would scarcely be to be had.

Sulis (Indian manufacture) are now in great demand. The last parcel that arrived, about four months ago, was bought up by a Yemen here, who has held firmly till now. He purchased them at from 1½ to 1¾ dollars the piece, and sells now easily at from 2½ to 3 dollars.

Sept. 3.—*Arrivals from Interior.*—About 80 medaneh butter, and sold at 2 dollars per medaneh. Butter in the interior is very cheap, but the difficulty and expense of transport adds to the price here considerably; besides, though the nominal duty levied by the Government at Arkeeko be 12 per cent., the exactions made by every petty employé are so numerous that the native merchant, before reaching the market here, has been taxed at least 25 per cent. Honey, 5 skins. No sales of native produce. During the stay of the caravans here, a good deal of manufactures, &c., are sold; but it is impossible to ascertain the exact quantities the caravans take with them in returning. A boat arrived from Jiddah, bringing 30 sacks rice, 10 bales of glass beads, and 50 bundles untwisted blue floss silk of inferior quality. This article is now selling at 3½ dollars per bundle of 99 drachms. Rice is now selling in the Massowah market at 4 dollars per sack of 125 rottoli.

N.B. Blue floss silk is one of the principal articles bartered for slaves. The description of beads proper for the Abyssinian market I will explain in my general observations.

Sept. 4.—*Arrivals from Interior.*—100 medaneh butter, and sold at 2 dollars per medaneh; also 6 skins honey.

Sept. 5.—Sailed for Bourbon, the Jules Aglac, Captain Lefevre. Cargo: 130 mules, 10 donkeys, and 50 crs. coffee. The mules purchased by the French consular agent cost him, one with another, 14 dollars a head. He paid, in addition, 1 dollar per head commission, and 12 per cent. duty to the Government. This is the first instance that such a duty has been levied. The coffee cost him at the rate of 15 rli. per dollar; the current price now is 16 per dollar, but a friend having been broker in the affair, explains why he paid more than the market rates. Donkeys are here very cheap, say from 3 to 4 dollars each, but they are of a very inferior quality.

Arrivals from the Interior.—130 medaneh butter, which was sold at 2 dollars per medaneh. Some months ago, butter sold here at 3 dollars, and, exported to Jiddah, there fetched 18 to 20 dollars

per cr. of 100 rli. Scheriff Pasha, however, having made a monopoly of it for his own account, and compelling the importers to sell it him at 12 dollars per cantar, there has since been less demand for the article. 50 hides; price asked, five-eighths of a dollar. 10 bundles goat and kid skins; the bundle contains about 500 skins each. The price is trifling: 15-40 to 1 pr. per skin, according to size. They are chiefly in demand in the Yemen and other parts of Arabia, where they are used for tobacco-pouches and purses, also for making bags for provisions.

Arrived from Dhalac, a native boat with a cargo of timber, grass, and mats, for building.

Sept. 6. *Arrivals from the Interior.*—200 medaneh butter, which was immediately purchased at 2½ dollars.

A native boat started for Jiddah, with a cargo of slaves, butter, and musk. This last was purchased at 7 dollars the wakieh (8 ounces).

An unlooked-for accident happened to the Jules Aglac on the point of leaving the port. The captain was informed that three of the mules in the hold had died during the night. On descending he discovered that, from bad ventilation, the heat of the place was overpowering; and scarcely had he time to hoist up the carcases of the three dead mules, than they were obliged to recommence in hoisting up others that had died. Owing to the obstinacy of the captain in not having the whole lot taken up for fresh air, the mortality went on increasing to a fearful extent. Though it may appear scarcely credible, it is nevertheless a fact, that before midnight he had thrown overboard 90 out of the 130 mules which had composed her cargo. Those that were saved he had on deck. The most astonishing thing is that the captain had brought out a cargo of mules from France to Bourbon without the loss of a single animal. As he had neither ports nor windsails, one may easily imagine that the want of fresh air caused this fearful mortality. A native here assures me that this is the first instance of such a thing happening. The ship remains now to get in a new cargo.

Sept. 7. Arrived from the interior, 150 medaneh butter; sold at 2½ dollars.

Sept. 8. Sailed a native boat for Loheia. Cargo: butter, honey, and 5 koragias French sword-blades. (The term koragia is applied

here to a bundle of 20 articles. It is used in speaking of hides, &c., and in fact anything that can be counted.) Also 20 koragias salted hides, and 5 horns musk.

Arrived from the interior, 135 medaneh butter; selling price 2⅝ dollars per med. The price of this article depends always on the demand for Jiddah; and will be purchased at a low price until the arrival of another boat from Jiddah, when the price will rise according to the demand. Arrived also, 20 skins honey, and some tanned hides.

Sept. 9. Sailed the Jules Aglac for Bourbon. To replace the mules that had died here, the captain purchased 60 more from Halil Bey, the Governor of Massowah, at the price he had bought the others, 14 dollars a head, with 12 per cent. duty, and 1 dollar per mule commission to Degontin. Before he got out of the port three of his new purchase died, and there is every reason to fear that his obstinacy in keeping them down in the hold will occasion a great mortality before he arrives at his destination.

Arrived from the Interior.—120 medaneh butter (selling price to-day, 2½ dollars per medaneh), a few skins honey, and about 1 cr. coffee.

Sept. 10. Sailed a native boat for Jiddah, her cargo composed of wax, butter, musk, slaves, and a few hides. Very little musk is exported to India from this place, being generally sent to Cairo by way of Jiddah. A person here assures me that in Jiddah the merchants adulterate it, and that in Cairo it undergoes a similar deterioration. If such be the case, very little of the pure article can ever reach the European markets. Ivory is sent mostly to Bombay from this, by the Banyan merchants.

Arrivals from the Interior.—150 medaneh butter, a few crs. coffee, some honey, wax, and 2 koragias hides.

Sept. 11. *Arrivals from the Interior.*—10 crs. coffee, 10 crs. wax, 3 koragia hides. Present price of coffee, 16½ rli. per dollar. Wax arrives here in an unpurified state. After being purified, in which process there is a loss of 25 per cent., it may be purchased here at 4¼ to 4½ dollars the faraslah of 2 rli.

Sept. 12. *Arrivals from the Interior.*—Butter 20 medaneh, coffee 12 crs., bees'-wax 200 faraslah. A purchase to-day of 20 menn (3 rli. each) tortoiseshell, at 6½ dollars per menn.

Sept. 13. *Arrivals from Interior.*—Butter 200 medaneh (sold at $2\frac{3}{6}$), 2 kor. hides.

Sept. 14. *Arrivals from Interior.*—Bees'-wax 10 faraslah, coffee 3 crs., and 80 medaneh butter. 20 crs. aniseed, of a poor quality; present price, 1 dollar per cr.

Sept. 15. *Arrivals from the Interior.*—Butter 80 medaneh (sold at $2\frac{3}{8}$), 5 sacks cardamoms, and some barley-flour.

Sept. 16. *Arrivals from Interior.*—Butter 180 medaneh; sold at $2\frac{1}{4}$ dollars.

Arrived from Loheia, a native boat with 20 hamleh maize (the hamleh contains 4 sacks of 300 rli. each). The article being much in demand sold readily at 16 dollars per hamleh.

Sept. 17. Arrived from Jiddah, a native boat. Cargo: 30 sacks rice (price now $3\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per 50 rli.), 20 boxes glass beads, 4 bales kohl, 2 bales muslins, 5 bales salitęę (Indian manufactures), 3 bales American cloths.

Sept. 18. Arrived from the interior, 250 medaneh butter (sold at $2\frac{1}{6}$ dollars), 20 faraslah bees'-wax, and 10 faraslah coffee.

Arrived from Loheia, a native boat. Cargo, 18 hamleh maize.

Sept. 19. Arrived from the interior, 50 medaneh butter; price $2\frac{1}{4}$ dollars per med.

Sept. 20. Arrived from the interior, 20 medaneh butter; price $2\frac{3}{8}$ dollars per med.

Arrived from Hodeida, a native boat. Cargo: 50 bales salitee, 5 bales maraoudi, 9 hamleh maize, and 50 sacks dates (price $1\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per sack of 100 rli.).

Sept. 21. Arrived from Jiddah, a native boat. Cargo: 20 bales salitee, 40 bales beads, 8 bales kohl, 1 bale broad-cloth, and 8 crs. glass-ware. A large quantity of German glass-ware is annually imported. The bottles, of a peculiar shape, are manufactured purposely for the Abyssinian market. The tumblers are generally of a very common description, and sell according to their quality.

Sept. 22. Arrived from the interior, 105 medaneh. butter (price $2\frac{3}{8}$), 2 koragia hides.

Sept. 23. Arrived from Yęjju, Galla, a caravan, bringing 2500

drs. ivory, 60 slaves, 55 horns musk, 80 crs. coffee, and 100 faraslah bees'-wax. At present, no demand either for ivory, coffee, or musk. Purified wax now sells at 4¼ per far.

Arrived from the interior, 105 medaneh butter; price 2¼ to 2⅜.

Sept. 24. Arrived from the interior, 120 medaneh butter (price 2¼), 10 skins honey.

Arrived from Loheia, a native boat. Cargo: 20 hamleh maize, 5 jars linseed-oil (price now 6 gobas per dollar).

Sept. 25. Arrived from the interior, 10 medaneh butter and 5 crs. aniseed.

Sailed for Jiddah, a native boat. Cargo: slaves, 18 horns musk, and some butter. The musk was bought at 7 dollars per wakieh—a low price, owing to there being no demand. As the Banyans, the only dealers in ivory, are now absent, the article might be purchased cheap, say at 24 dollars per wakieh for first quality. Coffee now selling at 16½ rli. per dollar. No sugar here at present.

Sept. 26. Arrived from the interior, 160 med. butter; price 2¼.

Arrived from Loheia, a native boat with 25 hamleh maize. Also a boat from Suakin, with maize for the troops.

Sailed, (D) boat for Loheia. Cargo: 200 sword-blades, and some glass-ware.

Sept. 27. Arrived from the interior, 125 medaneh butter; price 2⅜.

Sailed for Jiddah, a native boat. Cargo: butter, wax, hides, and musk.

Arrived, a caravan with 50 slaves, 20 cwt. coffee, 20 cwt. bees'-wax, and about 800 drs. ivory.

Sept. 28. Arrived from the interior, 75 med. butter.

Arrived from Loheia, 36½ hamleh maize. The price of this article here has fallen to 14 dollars per hamleh, and likely to decrease.

Sept. 29. Arrived from the interior, 75 medaneh butter.

Sept. 30. Arrived from the interior, 15 medaneh butter.

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

PRODUCE FROM THE INTERIOR.

Butter	–	Med.	2945
Honey	–	Skins	66
Hides	–	Kor.	330
Goat-skins	–	Bales	10
Coffee	–	Crs.	133
Musk	–	Horns	55
Slaves	–		110
Cinnamon.			
Aniseed	–	Crs.	25
Bees'-wax	–	Fer.	4180
Ivory	–	3300 dollars' worth.	

As boats leaving this port have merely to furnish themselves with Raftias from the divan, it is difficult to ascertain the exact quantity of the exports. This month left in all—

For BOURBON :—
1 ship. Cargo, { 100 mules and 10 donkeys.

For JIDDAH :—
4 boats. Cargo, { Slaves, butter, musk, wax, and hides.

For LOHEIA :—
2 boats. Cargo, { Butter, honey, musk, swords, and glass ware.

For HODEIDA :—
1 boat. Cargo, { Ivory, tortoiseshell, & mother-o'-pearl.

IMPORTS.

From JIDDAH :—

Rice – – – –	60 sacks.
Glass beads – – –	70 bales.
Blue silk – – –	50 ,,
Kohl – – – –	12 ,,
Muslins – – –	2 ,,
Indian stuffs – –	25 ,,
American cottons –	3 ,,
Broad-cloth – – –	1 ,,
Glass ware – – –	8 cases.

From LOHEIA :—

Maize – – – –	94½ hamleh.
Linseed oil – – –	5 jars.

From HODEIDA :—

Salitee (Indian stuffs)	50 bales.
Marawdis (Ind. stuffs)	5 ,,
Maize – – – –	9 hamleh.
Dates – – – –	10 sacks.

From SUAKIN :—

1 Government boat with maize.

October, 1848.

1*st*. (Sunday.) Arrived from the interior, 25 med. butter.

Arrived from Loheia, a native boat. Cargo: 48 hamleh maize.

2*nd*. (Monday.) Arrived from the interior, 30 med. butter.

Arrived from Hodeida, a native boat. Cargo: 10 hamleh maize; present price here, 10 dollars.

Arrived from Jiddah, a native boat. Cargo: 6 bales kohl, 15 bales beads, 10 sacks rice, 5 bales American unbleached long-cloths, 8 cr. copper in pieces, and sundries.

Note.—Kohl in Jiddah may be now had at 6¼ dollars per cr. Selling price here at this moment, wholesale, 7 dollars per cr.; in

retail, 8 dollars. Rice now 3¼ dollars per sack (of India). No sugar in the market. Butter, which at this moment may be purchased at 2¼ dollars per med., is now selling in Jiddah at 18 dollars per cr., but will fall soon.

3rd. (Tuesday.) Arrived from the interior, 15 med. butter; price to-day, 2¾.

4th. (Wednesday.) Arrived from the interior, 125 med. butter, 15 cr. honey, 2 cr. wax, 3 cr. coffee, about 300 drs. ivory, 4 slaves, 1 koragia tanned hides, 30 sacks wheat, also 30 sacks maize, 10 sacks beans, 10 sacks lentils, 100 sacks barley-flour. The Government charge no duty on the importation of any of these articles from Abyssinia, with the exception of wheat, which pays 12 per cent. Present prices:—Butter 2¼ dollars per med.; wax no demand; ivory no demand; musk, buying a large quantity, may be had at 6 drs. per 8 dollars' weight—in smaller quantities, at 6½ to 7 dollars per dr.

Arrived from Hodeida, a native boat. Cargo: 35 bales salitee, 15 large sacks dates, 5 bales marawdi, 15 ham. dourra, and 2 jars linseed-oil. Dourra to-day 9 dollars per ham.; dates 3 dollars per large sack.

5th. (Thursday.) Arrived from the interior, 30 med. butter (price 2 drs. 12½ 40), honey 2 crs.

Sailed for Suakin, a native boat. Cargo: muslins, marawdi, Surat tobacco, sandal-wood, and doofu. This article is the *operculum*, or horny substance which some species of shell-fish are furnished with to protect the mouth of their shells. These, in some parts of Nubia, are used for perfume, being burnt with sandal-wood. In Dhalac, the operculum of two species of shells (see samples) pass current for money, one species being reckoned at 8 rli. for a dollar, the other 10 rli.

6th. (Friday.) Arrived from the interior, 4 crs. honey, 135 med. butter, 3 kor. hides, unsalted. Selling price of hides, unsalted, 5 for a dollar.

7th. (Saturday.) Arrived from Loheia, two native boats. Cargoes: 75 and 32 hamlehs maize. Present price of the article, 12 dollars per hamleh.

Arrived from the interior, 8 slaves, 100 feraslah coffee, 60 fer. wax, 3 horns musk, 20 skins honey (8 crs.), 300 dollars' worth of ivory, and 190 med. butter. Coffee may this day be purchased at 1 dollar per 16 rottoli; wax, unpurified, 7 rli. per dollar.

8*th.* (Sunday.) Arrived from Jiddah, a native boat. Cargo: 30 bales beads, 12 bales kohl, 1 bale soap (Syrian), 1 bale cotton stuffs, 1 bale muslin.

Arrived from the interior, 25 med. butter and 2 crs. honey.

9*th.* (Monday.) Arrived from Loheia, a native boat. Cargo: 24 ham. maize.

Arrived from Hodeida, a native boat. Cargo: 14 bales cotton (Indian), 25 bales salitee, 5 bales foutahs,* 6 bales Surat tombak, 1 koragia planks for boat-building, and 5 jars linseed-oil.

Arrived from the interior, 120 med. butter (price $2\frac{3}{8}$), 24 crs. honey.

Maize now selling at 11 dollars per hamleh, and likely to fall.

10*th.* (Tuesday.) Sailed for Suakin, two native boats. Cargoes composed of 10 bales salitee, 12 bales foutahs, 2 bales muslins.

Arrived from the interior, 135 med. butter, 30 koragia goat and sheep skins, 13 kor. hides, 10 crs. honey, 2 crs. wax.

11*th.* (Wednesday.) Arrived from the interior, 3 crs. honey, 64 med. butter.

Sailed for Jiddah, two boats. Cargoes: 1000 crs. butter, 61 slaves, 20 horns musk (this was bought at 14 dollars per rli.), 5 crs. wax, and some hides.

Sailed for Yemen, a native boat. Cargo: 180 crs. butter, 50 crs. honey, 15 horns musk, and 12 kor. untanned hides.

12*th.* (Thursday.) Arrived from the interior, 50 med. butter, 10 crs. honey, 35 crs. wax, 8 kor. hides, 15 slaves, and about 500 dollars' worth of ivory.

Arrived from Hodeida, a native boat. Cargo: 20 hamleh maize, 25 bales salitee, 8 bales Indian beads, and 2 jars linseed-oil.

13*th.* (Friday.) Arrived from the interior, 90 med. butter, 9 crs. honey.

14*th.* (Saturday.) Arrived from Loheia, a native boat. Cargo: 25 hamleh maize.

Arrived from the interior, 2 crs. butter.

15*th.* (Sunday.) Arrived from Loheia, two boats. Cargoes: 65 and 40 hamleh maize.

Arrived from the interior, 150 med. butter, 12 crs. honey, 2 kor. hides, and 13 feraslah wax.

Maize now selling at 10 dollars per hamleh. The only purchasers

* "Foutahs"—striped napkins, worn by the men of these parts like a Scotchman's kilt. "Surat tombak" is the tobacco-leaf of which snuff is made.

being the Hababs, who bring butter, the price would go still lower in absence of a demand on their part.

One of the boats that arrived from Loheia had taken from this place 200 sword-blades for sale, but was obliged to bring them back, there being no demand.

As I before said, I disagree slightly with Mr. Innes on one or two points only: I cannot quite yield that it is impossible for a European to think of trading in the interior; I allow that there would be some considerable risk attending such a venture: in times of peace a caravan may pass unmolested, but in times of war or revolt, which are both, unfortunately, events of very frequent occurrence, the trader would have either to keep his person and property in some safe place, and wait patiently till the storm was over, or collect a force and fight his way to his destination. I should consider the latter as by far the most eligible plan; servants cost next to nothing, and all merchants, whether native or other, must have a number of people with each caravan to pack and unpack the loads every day: the only thing would be, where aggression was expected, to have a better class of men, armed with guns, and tolerably expert at their use. Some people may ask, "But how if your own servants should turn on you?" Such a thing never would enter my head: in my wanderings I have often been in situations where neither opportunities nor temptations were wanting, and entirely alone among negroes, but I cannot remember that the idea of my being in the slightest danger, whether in desert or forest, from those who were in the habit of eating with me, ever crossed my imagination for a single moment. I should not even have thought of saying this here, had it not been that since my return home I have repeatedly been asked, "Did you not feel lonely or in danger among the blacks?" Some people may say that I was too confiding in them, that I do not know them, and so forth, and cite instances of slaves, or perhaps servants, having robbed or murdered their masters—nay, even quote my own anecdotes of men murdering their comrades. As to my not knowing them, I can only say that during nearly seven years I never had a case of mutiny, or even a disrespectful

answer, and the greater part of this time was passed in countries where, had any of my people chosen to give me a knock on the head, he might have done so easily and with impunity, for I always slept out of doors, and was very often travelling on frontiers. I doubt not that many men might find difficulty in believing that I got off so well. I have heard even from tourists on the Nile numberless complaints of incivility, and worse, from their boatmen: one party of Englishmen, only two or three years ago, were well bastinadoed by their own sailors. Well, I have been up and down the Nile, and across the Nile in every part, and several times, and never yet sustained a moment's annoyance from any one. The mystery is soon unravelled. Some people think a good deal of themselves; this, all will allow, is a great weakness anywhere; it is inevitable ruin to one's comfort in travelling in the East. You see a dapper little Briton, with light hair, pink eyes, a sharp cracky voice, and green spectacles, strutting about like an ill-bred bantam-cock, and fancying that, because his grandfather was Lord Tomnoodle, or his father Sir Jeremiah Snooks, he is *par conséquent* considerably above all humanity, niggers especially. His mind is made up long before he enters his boat that every one of the crew is predisposed to *do* him in every possible manner, in fact that "they are a lot of dirty, thieving, disagreeable scoundrels;" if they should try to be good-humouredly familiar he considers it "demn'd impertinent;" votes their music and dancing a bore, and puts a stop to it; enters into none of their amusements; never leaves his cabin without a pair of trumpery pocket pistols stuck in his sash; and is heartily glad when he has got over what he considers a disagreeable duty—the tour of the Nile. Now-a-days the fashionable part of the river is getting used to the whims of our countrymen, and the Arabs begin to laugh at their absurdities and pocket their cash with all due civility. But, reader, if you should ever think of travelling in *savage* countries, you will do well to remember that superiority of mind, of body, or of purse, are the only things which command respect. The first will always be of use to you, the second you may display with advantage to

yourself in jest or in self-defence, and the third will at times be a serviceable, at times a dangerous companion. Be a gentleman always in your actions, never in your pretensions. *Real* worth is not lost among savages; a great or good man, whether he be one of themselves or a stranger, is soon recognised; but titled nothingness is a luxury which, poor creatures! their unenlightened minds cannot well appreciate, however deserving of respect the possessor of it may be among civilized people, as the walking monument of some ancestor who *was* a great man, or of some ancestress who was a king's mistress. In fine, treat your servants as your friends when they behave properly; let them see that you take an interest in their proceedings, and they will feel the same for yours; punish them firmly and severely when they really deserve it, but do not keep perpetually badgering them about little things, and you will get on very well. Remember that you should endeavour to adapt yourself to the customs and ideas of the people where you are travelling, and not expect them to fall into yours.

In regard to instances of treachery, &c., there are solitary exceptions, which only prove the rule: we need not look through many newspapers without discovering that even at home we have bad and good in our population.

However useful these remarks may be, they can scarcely be said to bear *directly* on the subject of commerce, so we will "try back." After the risks from robbery attendant on a European trading to the interior comes the rivalry and jealousy of the native merchants. I heard the same opinion expressed at Massàwa as Mr. Innes did, and perhaps from the same parties: the fact is that one or two Europeans have tried it and failed; but they set up in opposition to the natives. Now this was manifestly wrong. A European can command advantages, in the way of not being liable to be bullied by custom-house people, &c., which natives cannot; he ought therefore to be able to make it answer the native trader's purpose to supply him with merchandise in the interior, taking upon himself the onus of passing it into the port. To effect this he might, as a beginning, merely have a station on the range of hills, a day or two's journey from the coast. The Abyssinians would not be

angry at being put in the way of getting rid of their property, whether by sale or barter, with equal profit and a great sparing of time and trouble. But a still better plan, when our adventurer got a little known, and we will hope esteemed, in the country, would be to add to his establishment a trading fort on the Taccazy, and one or two others as intermediate stations. Could he manage this, which might be done by ingratiating himself with the ruler of Tigré, he would in time induce the Gondar merchants to make two journeys per annum to his fort instead of one to Massàwa—it would of course double their profits and his. I am convinced that the produce of the Amhàra and Galla countries would suffice for this doubled export, but if not, they would doubtless increase with the increased demand. If it were found necessary, a wooden bridge, laid on rough stone piers, might, I should think, be contrived, at little cost, to render the river passable at all seasons; and this would pay, either if the builder were permitted to exact a toll, or by gaining for him some respect as a benefactor to the mercantile part of the community. I may be wrong, but cannot see how such a proceeding as this could create jealousy. All the native merchants would be benefited; those of Tigré by meeting with a ready and fair market for their goods, without the trouble of passing the custom-houses at Massàwa, or of waiting there for some weeks to effect a sale; those from Gondar by being enabled to double their annual profits, and with the same advantages as the Tigréans.

But I would never undertake anything of the kind without first making the acquaintance of the principal merchants, pointing out to them the advantages which would accrue to them from the system, and obtaining their consent. Many of them are men of great worth and intellect, and I am sure, if properly managed, the project is feasible. As for the Prince of Tigré, if the merchants allowed it, he would have no difficulty if a sort of annual tribute were made him in European goods which he might fancy, and which, though their cost to the donor might be small, would, if well selected, be of great value in a country where they were novelties. A promise of a regular supply of arms, ammunition, &c., would be tempting. Twenty pounds'

worth would go a long way if well laid out. But how to get rid of the produce?—supposing that, for mere argument's sake, the possibility of my plans thus far is granted. I should have two or three small vessels, say schooners of 150 to 200 tons, in the Red Sea, partly if not entirely manned with natives: these I would keep constantly employed in every possible manner, never thinking it beneath me to turn them to any profitable purpose, whether for trading with butter, hides, and honey, or running a hundred or two lousy pilgrims from Suez or Cosseir to Jedda, at a dollar or two a head; anything so as to fill up the time between the regular great cargoes, some of which I would ship to India, or perhaps Aden (if I could send thence by return coal-ships), or Suez, or other port of the Red Sea. A little management would be needful in order to avoid delay at any port; but as the voyages would for the most part be only of a few days' duration, this would not be very difficult. I would always have a large supply of mules, so as to transport my goods quicker, and also to be able at any time to ship off a cargo or two to Mauritius: be it remembered their cost in keeping is not great, and the profit on those which arrive in safety at their destination enormous. But in all these matters I am a very incompetent judge. There are doubtless ways and means of getting rid of a valuable cargo from any port in the world when you have once got it there, and so I may well leave this part of the business to the imagination of my practical reader. I do not know then that I have anything more to suggest, excepting that Abyssinia is an unexplored mine of wealth—possessing, I believe, mineral treasures in great amount, iron of first-rate quality and in great abundance, gold in the interior, and doubtless elsewhere—a climate, as I have before said, of such variety that a person may in some situations fancy himself in a remarkably bright Europe, and after a few hours' journey be in a furnace—every quality of soil, from the poorest sand to the richest alluvial deposit—in short, for vegetable resources, though no country is more wanting in cultivated varieties, none is more abundant in natural ones; and I am convinced that, were they tried, almost anything would succeed, from the crab-apple to the pine-apple.

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